

A booke newe
ly translated out of Latyn
to Englyshe/ called The folowing
of Christe. with the Golden
epistle of saynt Barnard.



Whiche it varye wordes as to the readers
will appere. And in the latter ende after
the .iiij. booke is a shorte & deuoute morall
doctryne which is called the spiritual
lasse of the soule. And it is ryght good &
Ampt. A. u. p. 70

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The introduction.



Here after folowethe
a boke callid in las
tyl Imitacio Christi
that is to saye in Eng
lyshe / The folow
ynge of Christ/wher
in be conteyned foure
lytell boke / whiche
boke as some mē asserme was fyrst made
& compyled in latyn by the famous clerke
mayster Johan Gerson Chaucellour of
Paris. And the sayd foure boke be now
of late newly translated in to Englyshe
in suche maner as here after appereth/
thoughbe.iii. of the sayd boke of the sayd
iii. boke haue be before this tyme right
well & deuoutly translated in to Englyshe
by a famous clerk called mayster wyllyam
Atkynson whiche was a doctour of diu
nite. yet for as moche as the sayd transla
tour for some cause hym mouing i diuers
places lyfte out moche parte of some of
the chappitres / & somtyme varped fro the
letter as is the y^e chanter in the chur.

Regular of S. Augustin
Order in the Archdiocese
of Cullen. How

is translated into most
various languages, yea
it is seen in the
in the

The introduction:

gyder/ & therfore the sayd.iii.bokes be este-
sones trāslatyd in to Englyshe/ in suche
maner as here after foloweth/ to the intent
that they that lyst may at theyr pleasure
be occuppyed with the one or with the o-
ther after as theyr deuocion shall styre the
to whan they haue sene them bothe. And
after the said.iii.bokes foloweth the.iiii.
boke whiche was fyrste trāslated out of
freche i to Englyshe by the ryght noble
& excellent prynces Margarete late coun-
tess of Richemount & Derby mother vnto
the noble pryncce of blessed memory kyng
Henry the.vii.father vnto our soueraine
lorde the kyng that now is kyng Henry
the.viii. And for as moche as it was trā-
slatyd by the sayde noble prynces out of
freche it coulde nat folowe the latyn co-
nynghe ne so dyrectely as yf it had ben trā-
slated out of latin. And therfore it is now
translated also out of latyn/ & yet neuer-
theles it kepeth the substance & the effect
of the fyrst trāslatiō out of freche though
foryme it vary i wordes as to the reder
well appere. And in the latter ende after
the.iiii.boke is a shorte & deuoute morall
doctryne which is callyd the spiritual
lasse of the soule. And it is ryght good &

Ampt.

A.ii.

p.10

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profytable to euey persone ofte tymes to
take vpon it. .

¶ Here endeth the introduction. And
here after foloweth the Imptaz
cyon of Chyſte.



Good Chyſte
Rede and take good heed
What thou doſt do by the
non e ſeek the ſame

The fyrste booke.

Folio. i.

Of the Impracion or folowynge of Chyſte/and of the deſpyſynge of all vanities of the worlde. The fyrſte Chapitre.



E that foloweth me ſaythe Chyſte our Saupoure walketh nat in darkenes/ but he ſhall haue the lyght of lyfe/ theſe be the wordes of our lord Jeſu Chyſte: wherby we be admonyſhed and warned that we ſhal folowe his techyngeſ and his maner of lyuynge: if we wyll truly be illumyned and be deliuered from all blyndnes of herte. Let all the ſtudy of our herte be therfore ſet hencforth to haue our meditacion holly fixed in the lyfe/ & in the holy techyngeſ of Jeſu Chyſte: for his techyngeſ are of more vertue & of more ghoſtly ſtrength than are the techynge of al angellys and ſayntes. And he that throughe grace myght haue the inner eye of his ſoule/openyd to the ſothfaſt

yo granndfater
Thomas Kyte

Give to the world but give the world

The fyrste booke.

Lothfaste beholdynge of the gospelles of
Cryste/hulde fynde in them **Wana**: that
is to say spirituall sode of the soule. But it
is oft tymes sene that some persons which
ofte here the gospelles of Cryste: haue ly-
tell sweynes thereto that is for they haue
nat the spirite of Cryste. wherefore: if
we wyll haue the trewe vnderstandynge
of Crystes gospelles we muste study to re-
forme our lyfe to his lyfe as nycht as we
can. what awayllyeth it a man to reason
byghe secrete mysteries of the Trinite if
he lacke mekenes wherby he dyspleaseth
the Trinite: truely nothyng. For byghe
curious reasons make nat the man holy
nor ryght wyse. But a good lyfe maketh
hym beloued with god / I had leuer fele
compunction of herte for my synnes / tha-
nely to know the diffinition of compunc-
tion. If thou couldeste all the Bible with-
out the booke: and also saynges of all phi-
losophers by herte what hulde it profite
the without grace & charite. All that is in
this worlde is vanite: but to loue god &
only to serue hym. This is the moste no-
ble and the moste excellent wysdome that
maye be in any creature / by dyspyng of
this worlde: to drawe dayly nether & nether
to the

to the kyngdome of heuē. It is therfore a
great bayne / to labour inordinately for
worldly riches that shortly shall perishe
& to conceyte honour / or any other inordy-
nate pleasures or fleshely delectes in this
lyfe / whereby a man after this lyfe shal be
sore & greuously punysshed. How great
a baynte is it also to desyre a longe lyfe &
lytell to care for a good lyfe / to heede thynges
present: and nat to prouyde for thynges
that are to come / to lyue thynges that
shortly shall passe awaye / & nat to haste
thyther where is Joye enclasyng. Also
haue this common prouerbe ofte in thy
mynde / that the eye is nat satisfied ne ful-
ly pleased with the syght of any bodely
thyng ne the eare with heyrng. And
therfore studie to withdrawe the loue of
thy soule fro all thynges that ben vyssible
and tourne it to thynges that be inuysy-
ble. For they that folowe theyr sensually-
te hurte theyr owne conscience and lei-
the grace of god.

Agaynst bayne secular conynges
and of a meke knowyng of
our selfe. The. ii.

Chapitre.

Curp

The fyrste boke.

Every man naturally despyeth
to knowe: but what auaplethe
knowledge without the drede of
god. A meke Husbandman that serueth
god is more acceptable to hym/ than is a
curpouse philosopher whiche consyde-
rynge the course of heuyn/ wylfully for-
getteth hym selfe: he that well knoweth
hym selfe is vyle and obiecte in his owne
syghte and hath no deelyte in the vayne
praysones of man/ if I knewe all thyn-
ges that be in this worlde without cha-
rite/ what shulde it auaple me before god
that iugthe euery man after his dedes/
let vs therefore cesse fro the desyre of such
vayne knowledge/ for oftē tymes is founde
therin greate distraccion and deceyte of
the enemy wherby the soule is moche hy-
drade and let from the persyte and trewe
loue of god. They that haue great con-
nyng desyre comonly to be sene and to
be beholde wyse in the worlde/ and there
be many thynges that the knowynge of
them brynge but lytell profyte and lytell
frute to the soule/ and he is very vnwyse
that taketh hede to any other thyng that
to that/ that shal profyte hym to the helth
of his soule/ wordes fede nat the soule/ but
a good

The fyfthe booke.

a good lyfe refretheth the mynde / and a
clene conſcience byngeth a man to a fer-
me and a ſtable truſte in god. The more
cōnyng thou haſte / if thou lyue nat ther-
after / the more greuously ſhalt thou ther-
fore be iudged for the myſuſynge thereof.
Therefore reſe nat thy ſelfe in to pryde for
any craſte or cōnyng that is gyue unto the
but haue therfore the more feare & drede
in thy herte / for certayne it is that thou
muſte hercaſte yeelde therfore the ſtray-
ter accompte / if thou thynke that thou
knoweſte many thynges and haſte great
cōnyng / yet knowe it for certayne that
there be many mo thynges that thou kno-
weſt nat. And ſo thou mayſte nat ryght-
wiſely thynke thy ſelfe cōnyng / but ough-
teſt rather to confeſſe thyne ygnorance
& vncōnyng: why wylte thou preferre
thy ſelfe in cōnyng before other / ſythe
there by many other more excellent & more
cōnyng than thou / and better lernede
in the lawe: if thou wylt any thyng lerne
and knowe proſpytable to the helthe of
thy ſoule / lerne to be vnkowne & be glade
to be holden vile and noughte and vncō-
nyng as thou arte. The moſte hygh and
the moſte proſpytable cōnyng is this / a
man

The fyfte boke.

man to haue a sochtaste knowlege and a full despyrge of hym selfe. Also a man nat to presume of hym selfe / and alwaye to iuge and to thynke well and blessedly of other / is a sygne and a token of greate wysdome and of great perfeccion and syn guler grace / if thou se any persō synne or cōmytte any great cryme openly before the / yet iuge nat thy selfe to be better thā he. For thou knowest nat how lōge thou shalt perseuer in goodnes we be al frayle but thou shalt iuge no man more frayle than thy selfe.

¶ Of the teachynge of trouthe.

The.iii. Chapitre.

Happy and blessed is that persō whome trouthe teacheth & cōformeth nat by figures or by deceptfull voyces but as the trouthe is / our oppnyd and our wytte many tymes deceyueth vs / For we se nat the trouthe / what augyleth vs the knowlege of suche thig; as shall neyther helpe vs at the day of Iugement if we knowe the nor hurte vs if we knowe them nat. It is therefore great solpe to be neglygent in suche thyn ges as be profpytable and necessary to vs
and

and to labour for suche thynges that be
but curyous and dampnable. Truly if
we do so we haue euen but we se nat: and
what auayleth vs the knowledge of the
kynde and workyng of creatures truly
nothyng / he to whome the euerylastyng
worde that is Iesus spekyth: is dyschar-
ged of many wayne oppyns / and of that
worde all thynges procede and all thyng-
es openly shewe / crye and belyue that
he is god. No man without hym vn-
derstandeth the trouthe ne ryghtfully in-
geth / but he to whom all thynges is one /
and he that all thynges draweth to one
and all thynges setteth in one / and des-
pise nothyng: but one may anon be sta-
blyd i herte and be fully pacified in god.
O trouthe that god arte / make me one
with the in puryte charite / for all that I
crave / here / or se without the is a gre-
uous thyng to me / for in the is all that I
wyl or may desire / Yet all doctours be
still in thy presence: and let all creatures
keepe the in silence & thou onely lord speke
to my soule. The more that man is oned
to the / the more that he is gathered to-
gether i the / the more he vnderstandeth with-
out labour hygh secreete mysteries / for he
hath

The fyrste booke.

bathe rescued from above the lyghte of
vnderstandynge. A cleue/pure and a sta-
ble herte is nat broken ne lyghtely over-
come with ghostly laboures / for he doth
all thyng to the honour of god / & for he
is clerely mortified to hym selfe/therefore
he conceyted to be fre fro folowynge his
owne wyl. what hyndreth the more than
thy affections nat fully mortified to the
wyl of the spirite/truely nothyng more.
A good deuoute man so ordreth his out-
warde besynes that it draue nat hym to
the loue of it/but that he compell it to be
obedient to the wyl of the spirite and to
the ryght iugement of reason. who hath
a stronger batayle: tha he that labourerth
for to overcome hym selfe/and that shuld
be our dayly labour & our dayly desyre to
odercome our selfe/that we may be made
stronger in spyrite/& encrease dayly from
better to better. Every perfection in this
lyfe hath some imperfeccon annexed on
to it & there is no knowynge of this world
but that it is mixte with some blyndnes
of ygnorance. And therefore a meke kno-
winge of our selfe is more syker waye to
god/than is the seerhyng for hyghnes of
connyng. Connyng well ordred is nat
to be

to be blamed for it is good and cometh
of god/ but a cleane conscience and a vertu
ous lyfe is moche better & more is to be
desyred/ by cause some men study to haue
cōynge rather than to lyue well. Ther
fore they arre many tymes & bryng forth
littel good fruit or none. & if they wold be
as busye to auoyde synne & to plante ver
tues in theyr soules / as they be to moue
questions: there shulde nat be so many e
uyll thyngs sene in the world/ ne so moch
euill example gyuen to the people/ ne yet
so moche dyssolate lyuynge in religion.
At the daye of Iudgement it shal nat be
asked of vs what we haue red but what
we haue done ne howe well we haue sayd
but howe religiousely we haue lyued. Tel
me nowe where be all the great clerkes &
famous Doctours whome thou hast wel
knowen. when they lyued they flourished
greatly i theyr lernynge / and nowe other
men occupye theyr prebendes & promoti
ons/ & I can nat tel whether they thynke
any thyng on them. In theyr lyfe they
were holden great in the worlde/ & nowe
is lytell spekyng of them. & howe shortly
passeth a waye the glory of this world
with all the false deceyvable pleasures of

The fyfthe booke.

It wolde to god they lyte had accorded
well with theyr lernynge for than hade
they well studyed and rede / howe many
peryshe dayly i this worlde by vayne co
nynges that carely tell for a good lyfe ne
for the seruyce of god. And bycause they
desyre rather to be great i the worlde thā
to be meke therfore they vanysh awaye
in theyr lernynge as smoke in the heyre.
Truely he is great / that hath great cha
riter: he is great that is lytell i his owne
syght & that setteth at nought al worldly
pleasures as vyle dunge / so that he maye
wynne Christe. And that person is very
well taught that forsaketh his owne wyll
and foloweth the wyll of god.

¶ That lyght credence is nat
to be gyuen to wordes.

The.iii. Chapiter.

It is nat good lyghtly to be
leue every worde or insyncke
that cometh / but the thyng is
aunsedly and fealurely to be cōspydred and
pondred that almyghty god be nat offen
ded throughe oure lyghtnes. But alas
for sorowe we be so feaple that we anone
byleue

bylene of other euyl soner than good/ But
 neuertheles partyte men be nat so lyghte
 of credence/ for they knowe well that the
 fraplyte of mā is more prone to euyl than
 to good and that it is i wordes very vn-
 stable. It is therfore great wysdome nat
 to be hasty i our dedes/ ne to trust moche
 in our owne wyttes / nor lyghtely to be-
 leue every tale/ nor to shewe anone to o-
 ther all that we here or bylcue. Take al-
 waye counseyle of a wyse mā and coueyte
 rather to be instructed and to be ordered
 by other than to folowe thyne owne iudg-
 cyon/ a good lyfe maketh a man wyse a-
 gaynst god and instructeth hym in many
 thyngs that a synfull man shall neuer fele
 ne knowe. The more meke that a man is
 in hym selfe and the more obediēt that he
 is to god/ the more wyse & the more please
 full shall he be in euery thyng that he
 shall haue to do.

¶ Of the redynge of holy scripture.

The. v. Chapitre.

Charite is to be sought i holy scrip-
 ture / and nat eloquence & it shulde
 be redde with the same spryte that

The fyrste boke

it was fyrste made: we ought also to seeke
in holpe Scripture ghostely profyte / ra-
ther than curyosyte of style / and as glad-
ly shall we rede symple & deuoute bookes
of hyghe letnyng and connyng / let nat
the auctorite of thyne auctoure myslike
the / whether he were of great connyng
or lytel / but that the loue of the very pure
trouth styre the to rede. Ask nat who said
this: but take good hede what is sayde /
men passe lyghtly awaye / but the trouth
of god euer abydeth. Almyghty god spe-
keth to vs in his scrpyture in dyuers ma-
ners without acceptyng of persons / but
but curyosyte ofte letteth vs in redyng
of scrpyture whan we wyl reason and ar-
gue thynges that we shulde mekely & sim-
ply passe ouer / if thou wylt profyte by re-
dyng of scrpyture rede mekely simply &
faythfully and neuer desyre to haue ther-
by the name of connyng. Aske gladly &
here mekely the sayeng of sayntes: & mys-
like the nat the parables of auncient fa-
thers for they were nat spoken without
great cause.

Of inordinate affectyons.

The. vi. Chapptre.

Whan a mā desyret any thyng inordinatly: forth with he is inqueyted in hym selfe. The proude man/ and the couetous man neuer haue reste: but the meke man and the poore in spirite lyueth in great aboundaunce of rest & peace. A man that is nat yet mortified to hym selfe/ is lyghtly tempted and ouercomen in lytell and small temptacions. And he that is weyke in spirite and is yet somewhat Carnall and inclyned to sensyble thyngis may hardly withdraue hym selfe fro wordly desyres. And therfore he hathe ofte great greife & heuynes in herte whan he withdraueth hym from them. And he dysdayneth anone if any man resiste hym/ and if he opteyne that he desyret: yet he is inqueyted with grudge of conscience for he hathe folowed his passion which nothyng helpeth to gettinge of the peace that he desyred. Than by resyngne of passions is gotten the very true peace of herte & nat by folowinge of the/ there is therfore no peace i the herte of a Carnall man/ For in the herte of a mā that gyueth hym selfe all to outward thyngs/ but in the herte of a ghostely mā or woman whiche haue theyr deylet in

The fyrste boke.
god / is founde great peace and inwarde
quietnes.

¶ That bayne hope and clacyon of
mynde are to be fled and auoyded.
The. vii. Chapitre.

His bayne that puttethe his
truste in mā oꝝ in any creature
be nat a shamed to serue other
foꝝ the loue of Iesu Chryste / & to be pore
i this worlde foꝝ his sake / truste nat i thy
selfe / but all thy truste set in god / do that
in the is to please hym : and he shall well
helpe foꝝ the thy good wyl. Truste nat in
thyne owne connynge : ne yet in the con-
nynge oꝝ policie of any creature lyuynge
but rather in the grace of god which hel-
peth mcke persons / & those that presume
of them selfe he sufferethe to fall tyll they
be mcke / glouifie nat thy selfe in thy ry-
ches noꝝ in thy worldly frendes foꝝ that
they be myghty / but let all thy gloꝝy be i
god oncly that gyueth all thynges and
that despyeth to gyue hym selfe aboue all
thynges . Exalte not thy selfe foꝝ te lar-
genes oꝝ fayrenes of bodye / foꝝ with a ly-
tell sykenes it maye be sone defowled /

Joye nat in thy selfe for the happyte or
 rydenes of wyt lesse thou dysplease god
 of whose gyfte it is al that thou haste/
 holde nat thy selfe better thā other / lesse
 happely thou be therby impeyred in the
 syght of god that knoweth all that is in
 man/be not proude of thy good dedes / for
 the iugmēt of god be other thā the iuge
 mentis of man to whō it displeaseth ofte
 tymes that pleaseth man. If thou haue
 any goodnes or vertue in the/belpue yet
 that there is moche more goodnes and
 vertue in other so that thou mayste al-
 waye kepe the in mekenes. It hurteth
 nat thoughe thou holde thy selfe worse
 than any other thoughe it be nat so in
 dede / but it hurteth moche if thou pre-
 ferre thy selfe aboue any other be he ne-
 uer so great a synner. Great peace is with
 the meke mā but in the herte of a proude
 man is allwaye enuye and indygnacion.

¶ That moche famylaryte is to be
 fledde. The. viii. Chapitre.

O be nat thy herte to euery pson
 but to him that is wyse/secrete
 and dredynge god / be seldome
 with yonge folkes and straungers flates
 Amyta, B. ii.

Te fyrste boke.

not ryche men/ & a toze great men do nat
lyghtly appere. Accompany thy selfe with
meke persons and symple in herte that
be deuoute and of good gouernaunce and
treate with them of thynges that may
edyfye & strength thy soule. Be nat fami-
lyer to any woman. Coueyte to be famy-
lyer onely with god and his Angells/ but
the famplyarite of mā as moche as thou
maiste loke thou eschewe/ charite is to be
had to all: but famplyarite is nat expedi-
ent. Somtyme it happeneth that a persō
vknownen throughe his good fame is
moche cōmendable/ whose ptesence after
lyketh vs not so moche. we wene somtyme
with our ptesence to please other/ whā
we rather dysplease them throughe the
cuyll maners and cuyll condycions that
they se and wyll consydre in vs.

¶ Of meke subiection and obedyence
and that we shall gladly folowe
the counseyle of other.

The. ix. Chapitre.

Is a great thyng to be obe-
dient to lyue vnder a prelate &
in nothyng to seke our owne

lybertie: It is moche more suter waye
to stande in the state of obedience/thā in
the state of prelacye. Many be vnder obe
dience more of necessitye than of charite/
and they haue great payne and lyghtely
murmure & grudge: and they shall neuer
haue lybertie and freydome of spirite tyll
they hooly submyte the selte vnto theyr
superiour. So here & there where thou
wylte: & thou shalt neuer fynde perspye
rest: but in meke obedience vnder the go
uernance of thy prelate. The ymage
nyng & the chaungynge of places hath
deceyued many a religious person/trou
the it is that euery mā is dysposed to do
after his owne wyl / and best can agre
with the that folowe his wayes. But if
we wyl that god be amōge vs: we muste
somtyme leue our owne wyl though it
seme good/that we maye haue loue & pea
ce with other. who is so wyse that he can
fully knowe all thynges: truely none.
Therefore truste nat moche to thy owne
wytt. But here gladly the counseyle of
other. And if pource the thyng whiche
thou woldest haue done be good and pro
fyttable/and yet neuerthelesse thou leuest
thyne owne wyl therein and folowest a-

The fyrste boke.

ther: Thou shalt fynde moche profyte
therby. I haue ofte tymes herde say that
it is more surer waye to here & take coun-
saile than it is to gyue it. It is good to
here euery mannes counsaile but nat to
agre whā reason requyret it is a sygne
of a great syngularyte of mynde and of
moche inwarde pryde.

¶ That we shulde auoyde superfluyte
of wordes and the company of
worldly lyvinge people.

The .x. Chapitre.

Auoyde the zpany of al world-
ly lyving people as moche as
thou mayste: for the creating
of worldly maters letteth greatly the fer-
uoure of spirite/though it be done with
a good intēt/we be anone deceyued with
vanyte of the worlde and in maner are
made as thral vnto it: but we take good
hede. I wolde I had holdē my peace ma-
ny tymes whā I haue spoken / and that
I had nat ben so moche amonge world-
ly company as I haue bē. But why are
we so glad to speke & common to gyther
sith we so selde departe without some

hurte of conscience / this is the cause by
 our cōpnyng to gyther we thynke to
 comfote eche other and to refreshe oure
 hertes whan we be troubled with vayne
 ymagynacyons : & we speke moste glad-
 ly of suche thynges as we moste loue or
 elles of thynges that be moste contrary
 ous vnto vs. But alas for sorowe all is
 vayne that we do/for this outwarde cō-
 forte is no lytell hyndraunce of the treue
 inwarde comfote that commeth of god.
 Therefore it is necessary that we watche &
 praye that the tyme passe nat awaye fro
 vs in ydelnes : If it be laufull and expe-
 dient to speke/speke thⁱ of god and suche
 thyngs as are to the edyfing of thy soule
 or of thy neybour/s & cuylle vse and a nec-
 lygence of our ghostely profyte / maketh
 vs oft tymes to take lytel hede howe we
 shulde speke . Neuerthelesse somtyme it
 helpeth ryght moche to the helthe of the
 soule/a deuoute cōpnyng of spirituall
 thyngs : specially whā men of one mynde
 & of one spirite in god/do mete and speke
 and comen to gyther.

¶ The means to gette peas/and of
 desyre to profyte in vertues.

The.xi. Chapitre.

The fyrste boke.

We myghte haue moche peace if we wolde nat medle with other mēnes saynges and doynges that belonge nat vnto vs/ Howe maye he longe lyue i peace that wylfully wyl medle with o- ther mēnes busynes/ and that seeketh oc- casyons withoutfourthe in the wordle & seldome oꝝ neuer gathereth hym selfe to gether in god/ blessed be the treue symple & meke persons/ for they shall haue great plente of peace/ why haue many sayntes bene so perfytylly contemplatyue/ for they alwaye studied to mortifie the fro world- ly desyres that they myght feel with al the power of theyꝝ herte tēde to our lord. But we be occupied with our passions & be moche busyed with trashtory thyngs and it is very seldome that we may ouer come any one vyce. And we be nothyng quyk to our dayly dutyes wherfore we remayne colde and slowe to deuocyon/ if we were perfytely mortified to the world and to the fleshe and were inwardly pu- ryfied in soule we shoulde anone sauour he- uenly thynges and somewhat shulde we haue experyence of heuently contempla- cion. The greatest hynderaunce of the he- uently contemplacyon is / for we are nat

pet clerely deliuered fro our passions &
 concupiscence/ne we enforce not our selfe
 to folowe the waye that holy saintes haue
 gone before vs/but whā any lytel aduer-
 syte cōmeth to vs we anone caste downe
 therein & tourne vs' ouersone to seke man-
 nes cōforte. But if we wolde as stronge
 men and as myghty Champions fyghte
 strōgly in this ghostly batayle/we shuld
 vndoughtedly se the helpe of god come to
 our nede/ for he is alwaye redye to helpe
 all them that truste in hym. And he pro-
 cureth occasyōs of suche batayle to thēds
 we shulde overcome & haue the victoꝝy
 & in the ende to haue the greater reward
 therfoꝝe:if we set thende and perfeccyon
 of our relyggyon in these outwarde obser-
 uances / our deuociō shall sone be ended.
 wherfoꝝe we muste set our are depe to the
 rote of the tree / that we purged fro all
 passions maye haue a quyet mynde. If
 we wolde every yere overcome one bycc/
 we shulde anone come to perfeccion / but
 I feare rather that cōtrary wise we were
 better & purer in the begynninge of our
 conuersion than we be many yeres after
 we were conuerted. Our seruour and des-
 syre to vertue shulde dayly increase in vs

The fyrste boke.

as we increace in age. But it is now
thought a great thyng if we may holde
a litell spercle of the feryour that we had
fyrste/ but if we wolde at the begynnyng
bryke the euyl inclinacion that we haue
to our selfe & to our owne wyl/ we shulde
after do vertuous werkes easely & with
great gladnes of herte. It is an harde
thyng to leue euyl customes: but it is
more harde to bryke our owne wyl. But
it is mooste harde euermore to lye i payne
and endlesly to lese the ioyes of heuē. If
thou ouercom nat small thyngs & lyghte
howe shalte thou thā ouercome the grea
ter. Resyste therfore quykely in the be
gynnyng thy euyl inclynacions: & leue
of hole all thyne euyl customes lest hap
ly by lytell and lytell they brynge the af
ter to greater dyspulte. ¶ If thou wol
dest consydre howe great inly prais thou
shuldest haue thy selfe & howe great glad
nes thou shuldest cause in other in beha
uynge of thy selfe well. I suppose verily
thou woldest be moche more diligent to
prospyte in vertue than thou haste ben be
fore this tyme.

¶ Of the prosyte of aduersyte.

The .xii. Chapitre.

IT is good that we haue sōtime
gryeffes & aduersities : for they
driue a man to beholde hym
selfe & to se that he is here but as i an ex-
ple / & he lerned thereby to knowe that he
ought nat to put his truste i any worldly
thyng. It is good also that we suffre sō
tyme cōtradiciō / and that we be holden
of other as euill and wretched & synfull
thoughe we do well and entende wel / for
suche thynges helpe vs to mekenes and
myghtely defende vs frome vayne glory
& pryde: we take god the better to be oure
Iuge & wytnes / whan we be outwardly
dispyssed in the worlde / & that the worlde
ingeth nat wel of vs therfor a mā ought
to stable him self so fully i god that what
aduersyte so euer befall vnto hym he shal
nat nede to seke any outwarde comforte.
whā a good man is troubled or tempted
or is inqwyted with euill thought / thā
he vnderstandeth & knoweth that god is
mooste necessary to him / & that he may no
thyng do that is good without him. Thā
he soroweth / wapeleth & prayeth for the
miseries that he ryghtfully suffreth. Thā
it pryketh hym also the wretchednes of
this lyfe and he conceyted to be dissolued

The fyrste boke.

from this bodye of dethe/and to be with
Christe. And thā also he seeth wel: there
maye be no ful peace ne perfite speker-
nes in this worlde.

¶ Of temptations to be resysted.

The. xii. Chapitre

As longe as we lyue in this
worlde: we maye nat be fully
without temptacyon / For
as Job sayth tēptacion is the lyfe of mā
vpon erthe/therfore euery man shulde be
well anenste his tēptacions and wathe
in prayers that the ghostly enemy synde
nat fynde place to deceyue hym/whiche
neuer slepethe but alwaye goeth aboute
sekinge whome he maye deuoure. There
is no man so persyte ne so holpe in this
worlde/that he somtyme ne hathe temp-
tacyons / & we may nat fully be without
them/for though they be for the tyme be-
rye greuous and paynfull/ yet if they be
resysted they be very profitable/for a mā
by experience of suche temptacyons / is
made more meke and is also purged and
iformed i dyuers maners which he shuld
neuer haue knowē / but by experyence of

suche temptacions. All blessed sayntes that nowe is crowued in heuen grewe & prospered by tēptacions and tribulacions and those that coulde nat well bere temptacions/ but were finally overcome/ be taken perpetual prisoners in hell. There is no ordre so holpe ne no place so secreete that is fully without temptation & there is no man that is fully syker from it here in this lyfe/ for in our corrupte bodye we bere the mater wherby we be tēpted/ that is our inordynate concupyscence where in we were bozne. As one temptaciō goth/ an other cometh and so we alwaye haue som what to suffre / & the cause is for we haue lost our innocēcy. Many folke seke to fle temptation/ and they fall the more greuously in to it. For by onely fleynge we maye nat haue victorie/ but by mekenes and pacyence we be made stronger thā al our enemies/ He that onely fleeth the outwarde occasions and cutteth nat awaye the inordinate desyres hydde inwardly in the herte shall lytell profite/ & temptaciōs shall lyghtly come to hym a gayne and greue him more thā they dyd fyrste/ by lytell and lytell with patience & with sufferaunce / and with the helpe of

The fyrste boke.

god/thou shalt soner ouercome tempta-
cions than with thyne owne strength &
importunyte. In thy temptacon it is
good that thou ofte aske counsaile and
that thou be nat rygorouse to no person
that is tēpted/but be glad to cōforte him
as thou woldest be cōforted. The begyn-
nyng of all euill temptacions is in con-
staunce of mynde and to lytell a truſte in
god. For as a ſhypp without a guide is
driue hether & theder with euery ſtoyme
So an vnſtable man that anone leueth
his good purpoſe in god/is diuerſly tēp-
ted/the fyre proueth golde / & temptarys
proueth the right wyſe man / we knowe
nat many tymes what we can ſuffre/but
tēptacon ſheweth playnly what we are
and what vertue is in vs. It is neceſſary
in the begynnyng of euery tēptacion to
be well ware / for thā the enemye is ſone
ouercome if he be nat ſuffred to enter in
to the herte. But that he be reſpyed and
ſpytte out as ſone as he pſereth to entre
for as a bodely medicin is very late mint
ſtred whā the ſpekeus hath ben ſuffred
to encrease by longe contynuaunce/ſo it
is of temptacion. Fyrſt cometh to the
mynde an vnclene thoughte / and after

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The fyrste booke. Folio. xliii.

foloweth a stronge Imagynacpon: and
than delectacpon and dyuers euill mo-
cyons/and in the ende foloweth a ful as-
sent. And so by lytell and lytell the ene-
mye hath the full entree for he was nat wy-
sely resisted in the begynnynge/& the more
flowe that a man is in resystynge the
more weyke he is to resyste/and the ene-
mye is dayly the more stronger agaynst
hym. Some persons haue theyr greatest
temptacions in the begynnynge of theyr
conuersyon / some in the ende: and some
in maner all theyr lyfe tyme be troubled
therwith / and ther be many that be but
lyghtly tempted: and al this commeth of
the great wysdom & ryght wysnes of god
whiche knoweth the state and merite of
euery person: & ordeyneth al thyngis for
the beste / and to the euerlastynge helthe
& saluacyō of his electe & chosen people.
Therefore we shall nat dyspeyre whan we
be tempted but shall the more feruentlye
praye vnto god that he of his infynyte
goodnes and fatherly pyte vouchesafe or
helpe vs i euery nede & that he accordyng
to the saynge of saint Poule so prouēt vs
with his grace in euery tēptaciō that we
shall may susteyne/ let vs than meke our

The fyrste boke.

soules vnder the strōg hāde of almighty
god / for he wyl saue all them and exalte
all them that be here meke and lowe in
spirite. In temptacions & tribulacions
a man is proued howe moche he hath
profited / & his meryt is thereby the great
auncie god / & his vertues are the more
openly shewed. It is no great maruayle
if a man be seruēt and deuoute whan he
felethe no grefe: but if he can suffre paciēt
ly in the tyme of temptacions or other
aduersite / and therewithall can also styre
hym selfe to seruour of spirite it is a tokē
that he shall greatly profyte hereafter in
vertue and grace. Some persons be kept
from any great tēptacions: and yet day-
ly they be ouercome throughe lytell and
small occasyons / and that is of the great
goodnes and suffraunce of god to kepe
thē in mekenes / that they shall nat truste
ne presume of them selfe / that se thē selfe
so lyghtly and in so lytell thynges dayly
ouercome.

¶ That we shall nat Iuge lyghtly
other mēnes dedes / ne cleue
moche to our owne wyl

The.iiii. chapitre

Have alwaye a good eye to thy
 selfe: and beware thou iudge nat
 lyghtly other men. In iugynge
 other men a man ofte laboureth in vayne
 ofte erreth and lyghtly offendeth god/ but
 in iugynge hym selfe and his owne dedes
 he alwaye laboureth, frutfully and to his
 ghostly profyte / we iuge oft tymes after
 our herte and our owne affectyons / nat
 after the truthe / for we ofte lese the true
 iugement throughe our pryuate loue.
 But if god were alwaye the hole intent
 of our desyre we shulde nat so lightly erre
 in our iugementes / nor so lightly be trou-
 bled for that we be resisted of our wyll/
 but comenly there is in vs some inwarde
 inclynacyon or some outwarde affectyon
 that draweth our herte with them frome
 the treue iugement. Many p'sons throughe
 a secrete loue that they haue to theyr selfe
 worke vndescretely after theyr owne wil
 and nat after the wyll of god / & yet they
 wene nat so / & they seeme to stande i great
 inwarde peace whan thynges folowe af-
 ter theyr mynde: but if it folowe otherwys
 than they wolde / anon they be moued
 with impacience and be ryght heuy and
 penyful. By diuersites of oppynions

The fyrste booke.

spedde many tymes dyscenciōs byt wene
frendes & neyghbours/and also byt wene
religious & deuoute persones. An olde cu
stome is hardly broken and no man wyl
lyghtly be remoued from his owne wyl/
but if thou cleue more to thyne owne wyl
or to thyne owne reason thā to the meke
obediēce of Iesu Christe/it wyl be longe
or thou be a mā illumined with grace/for
almighty god wyl that we be perfyte
subiecte & obediēt to hym / and that we
ascende & flye hygh above our owne wil
& above our owne reason by a great bren
nyng lone and a hole desyre to hym.

Of werkes done in charite.

The. xv. Chapitre.

Eo nothyng in the worlde not
for the loue of no creature/no cypill
is to be done/but somtime for the neede co
forte of our neyghboure a good dede
maye be deferred or be touned in to a no
ther good dede/ for thereby the good dede
is nat destroyed/but is changed in to bet
ter without charite the outwarde dede is
lytell to be praysed but what so euer is
done of charite be it neuer so lytell of nee

tter so despytable in syght of the worlde:
 it is ryght profytable before god whiche
 iudgeth all thyng after the intent of the
 doer and nat after the greatnes or wo-
 thynes of the dede: he doth moche that
 moche loueth god: & he doth moche that
 dothe his dede well: and he dothe his de-
 de well that dothe it rather for the com-
 mynalte than for his owne wyll. A dede
 somtyme semeth to be done of charite & of
 loue to god/whā it is rather done of a car-
 nalite & of a flesshy loue than of a chari-
 table loue/for cōmonly some carnal inel-
 natio to our frendes/or some inordynate
 loue to our selfe/or some hope of a tempo-
 rall rewarde or a desyre of some other p-
 fyte moueth vs to do the dede / & nat the
 pure loue of charite. Charite seketh nat
 him selfe i that he doth: but he desireth to
 do onely that shall be honoure & praisynge
 to god/he enuieyth no mā for he loueth no
 pryuate loue: nor he wyll nat Joye i him
 selfe but he coueteth about al thigs to be
 blessed in god / he knoweth well that no
 goodnes begynneth origynally of mā / &
 therefore he referreth al goodnes to god of
 whome all thyngs procede & i whome all
 blessed saits do reste i everlastinge fruyt

The fyrste booke.

¶ He that had a lytell spercle of this payte charite shulde fele sothefastly in his soule that all erthly thynges be full of vanyte.

¶ Of the sufferynge of other mennes. defaults. The. xvi. chapitre.

Suche defaults as we can nat amede in our selfe nor in other/ we muste patiently suffre tyll our lord of his goodnes wyll otherwyse dispose. And we shall thynke that happily it is so best for to be for prouinge of our patience: without whiche our merytes are but lytell to be pondred/ Nevertheless thou shalt praye hertely for suche impedimentes that our lord of his great mercy and goodnes vouchesaue to helpe vs that we may patiently bere the. If thou admonyshe any person ones or twyse he wyll nat take it: styue nat overmoche with hym but comytte al to god that his wyll be done and his honoure in all his seruantes/ for he can well by his goodnes tourne euyl in to good: studie alway that thou be patyēt in sufferinge al other mennes defaults; for thou haste many thin

The fyrste booke. Folio. xviij.

ges in the that other do suffre of the/and
if thou can nat make thy selfe to be as
thou woldest/howe mayste thou tha loke
to haue an other to be ordred in all thyn-
ges after thy wyll. we wolde gladly haue
other persyte / but wyll nat amende oure
ownc default; we wolde that other shuld
be straptely corrected for theyr offences:
but we wyll nat be corrected. It myslyp-
keth vs that other haue lybertie: but we
wyll nat be denyed of that we aske. we
wolde also that other shuld be restrayned
accordynge to the statutes / but we in no
wyse wyll be restrayned. Thus it appe-
reth euidently that we seldome ponde-
re our neyghboure as we do our selfe: if all
men were persyte what had we than to
suffre of our neyghbours for god/therfor
god hath so ordeyned that one of vs shall
lerne to bere anothers burden/for in this
worlde no man is without defeaute: no
man without a burden / no man suffi-
cient to hym selfe / nor no man wyse
ynoughe of hym selfe / wherfore it beho-
ueth eche one of vs to bere the burden of
other/to comforte other / to helpe other/
to enforme other/and to instructe and ad-
monyshe other in all charite: who is of

The fyrste boke,
moſte vertue appereth beſt in tyme of ad-
uerſite. Occaſiōs make nat a man ſcaple
but they ſhewe openly what he is.

What ſhulde be the lyfe of a true reli-
giōs perſone. The. xvi. Chapitre.

I behoueth the to bricke thyne
owne wyll in many thynges if
thou wylt haue peace and con-
corde with other. It is no lyrell thyng
to be in monaſteries or in congregaciōs
and to contynue there with out complay-
nyng or myſſayng and faythfully to p-
ſeuer there vnto the ende / bleſſed be they
that there lyue well & make a good ende.
If thou wylte ſtande ſurely in grace and
morale pſyte in vertue; holde thy ſelfe as
an outlawe and as a pylgrime here i this
lyfe / and be glad for the loue of god to be
holden as a ſole and as a vyle perſone in
the worlde as thou arte. The habyte and
conſure helpe lytell / but the chaungynge
of lyfe & the mortifieng of paſſiōs make
a perſone perſyte and true religious / he
that ſeketh any other thyng in religion
than purely god & the helthe of his ſoule
ſhall fynde nothyng there but trouble &

The fyrste boke. Folio. xbiij
forowse / & he may nat stande longe there
in peace & quyetnes / that labouryth nat
to be leste & subgect to al. It is good ther
fore that thou remembre ofte that thou
cameste to religion to serue and nat to be
serued. And that thou arte called thither
to suffre and to labour / & nat to be ydle
ne to tell bayne tales. ¶ In religion a
man shall be proued as golde in a furnace
and no man maye stande longe there in
grace and vertue / but he wyl with all his
herte meke hym selfe / for the loue of god.

¶ Of the exampls of holy
fathers. The. xliii.

Chapitre.

Behold the lyuely exampls of
holy fathers and blessed saintes
in whome flourysshed & shone
all true perfeccion of lyfe and all perfyte
religion. And thou shalte se howe lytel it
is and welnyghe as nothynge that we do
nowe in these dayes in cōparyson of thē.
¶ What is our lyfe if it be to thē compay
red. They serued our lord in hunger & in
thurst / in heate / in colde / in nakydnes / in
laboure ; and in wepyng / in bygylles

The fyrste booke.

and fastynges / in prayours and in holy
meditations in persecutions and in ma-
ny represses. O howe many & howe gre-
uous tribulatiōs suffred the apostles mar-
tyrs/confessours/virgins and other holy
sayntes that wolde folowe the steppes of
Chryst. They refused honoures & all bo-
dely pleasures here in this lyfe: that they
might alway haue the euerlastyng lyfe.
O howe strapte and howe abiecte a lyfe
lede the holy fathers in wyldernes: howe
greuous temptacion they suffred / howe
fyerly they were with theyr ghostly ene-
myes assayled: howe seruēt prayour they
dayly offered to god / what rygourous ab-
stynence they vsed / howe great zeale and
feruour they had to spirituall pyfte / how
stronge batayle they helde agaynst all
synne / and howe pure and hole intēt they
had to god in all theyr dedes / on the day
they laboured & on the night they prayed
And thoughe they laboured on the daye
bodely / yet they prayed in mynde / and so
they spent theyr tyme alway frutefully
& thought every houre shorte for the ser-
uyce of god / & for the great swetnes that
they had in heuently contemplacion / they
forgotte ofte tymes theyr bodely refeccyō

The fyrste booke, folio. xix.

All cyches honourdynges kynnesmen
and frendes they renounced for the loue
of god/they coueted to haue nothyng of
the worlde and scarcely they wolde take
that was necessary for the bodely kynde.
They were poore in wordly goodes but
they were riche in grace and vertue: they
were nedye outwardly/ but inwardly in
theyr soules they were replenished with
grace & ghostly comfortes. To the worlde
they were alpens and straungers/ but to
god they were ryght dere and samplere
freundes. In the sight of the worlde and
in theyr owne syght they were vyle and
abiecte/ but in the syght of god and of his
sayntes they were precious and syngher-
ly electe. In them shone all perfeccion of
vertue/true mekenes / synple obedience/
charite/and paciſſe/with other lyke ver-
tues & gracious gyftes of god. Wherfor
they profyted dayly in spirite and obtay-
ned great grace of god. They be lefte as
an example to all religious persons and
more ought theyr examples to ſtore them
to deuotion and to pſyte more and more
in vertue and grace/ than the great mul-
titude of dyſſolute & ydele persons ſhuld
any thyng drawe them abacke. ¶ What

The fyrste boke.

feruour was in religious persons at the begynnynge of theyr religion / what deuotion in prayers / what zeale to vertue / what loue to ghostly dyscipline / & what reuerence and meke obedience shewyd in them vnder the rule of theyr superiour truely theyr dedes yet bere witnesse that they were holy and perfyte that so myghtely subdued the worlde and thyrste it vnder fote. Nowe adayes he is accompted vertuous that is no offender and that may with pacience kepe some lytell sparckle of that vertue & of that feruoure that he had fyrste. But alas for sorowe it is throughe our owne slouth & neglygence and throughe lesynge of tyme that we be so sone fallen from our fyrste feruoure in to suche a ghostly weykenes and dulnes spirite / that in maner it is to teduous to vs for to lyue / but wolde to god that the desyre to profyte in vertue slepte nat so bitterly in the: that ofte haste sene the holy examles of blessed sayntes.

¶ Of the exercyses of a good religious persone. The

xix. Chapt.

tre.

The lyfe of a good religious
man shulde shyne in all vertue
and be inwarde as it appereth
outwarde and that moche more inwarde
for almyghty god beholdethe the herte
whome we shulde alwaye honoure and
reuerence as if we were euer in his boode
ly presence and appere before hym as an
gelles cleane and pure shynynge in al ver
tue / we oughte euery daye to renewe
our purpose in god / and to steepe our herte
to seruoure and deuocion: as though it
were the fyrste daye of our conuersion &
dayly we shall praye and say thus. Help
me my lord Iesu that I maye perseuer
in good purpose and in thy holy seruyce
vnto my deth and that I maye nowe this
present daye perfetelye begynne for it is no
thyng that I haue done in tyme past.
After our purpose & after our intent shall
be our rewarde / & though our intente be
neuer so good yet it is necessarye that we
put therto a good wyll and a great deli
gence / for if he that ofte tymes purposeth
to do well & to profyte in vertue yet say
eth in his doyng / what shall he do than
that selde or neuer taketh suche purpose.

The fyrste boke.

Let vs entend to do the best we can / and
yet our good purpose may happen to be
letted and hyndred in dyuers maners / &
our speciall hyndraunce is this / that we so
lyghtly leue of oure good exerceyses that
we haue vsed to doo before tyme / for it is
seldome sene that a good custome wylful-
ly broken may be recouered agayne with-
out great spiritual hyndraunce. The pur-
pose of ryght wyse men dependeth in the
grace of god more than in them selfe or i
theyr owne wysdome / for man purposeth
but god disposeth / ne the waye that man
shall walke in this worlde is nat in hym
selfe but in the grace of god. If a good cu-
stome be somtyme leste of for helpe of our
neyghboure / it maye sone be recouered
but if it be leste of through slouth or ne-
glygence of our selfe it wil hybde vs great-
ly and hardly wil it be recouered agayne
Thus it apereth that though we incou-
rage our selfe all that we can to do well /
yet we shall lyghtly fayle in many thyn-
ges. And neuertheles though we maye
nat alway fulfyl it / yet it is good that we
alway take suche good purpose especial-
ly agaynst suche thynges as hyndrethe
vs mooste / we muste also make dyligente

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxi.

serche bothe within vs and without vs
that we leue nothyng inordinate vnc-
formed i vs as nyghe as our fraplte may
suffre / & if thou can nat for fraile of thy
selfe do thus contynually / yet at the leest
that thou do it ones on the day euenynge
or moynynge. In the moynige thou shalt
take a good purpose / for that daye folo-
wynge : and at nyght thou shalt dyscusse
dyligently howe thou hast behaued the
the daye byfore in worde / in dede / and in
thought / for in them we do ofte offende
god & our neyghboure. Arme the as chri-
stes true knyght with mekenes and cha-
rite ayenst all the malice of the enemye.
Refrayne glotony & thou shalt the more
lyghtly / refrayne all carnall desyres. Let
nat the ghostly enemy fynde the all ydle /
but that thou be redynge / writtyng / pra-
ynge deuoutly / thynkynge / or some other
good labour doynge / for the compnyalte.
Godely exercyses are to be done secretly :
for that that is profyt able to one is som-
tyme hurtfull to a nother / and also spiri-
tuall labours done of deuocion are more
surely done in priuite than in open place.
And thou muste beware that thou be nat
more redy to priuate deuotions than to

The fyrste booke.

them that thou arte bounde to by duetye
of thy religion; but whā thy duety is ful-
fylled than addē therto as thy deuotion
gyueth. All maye nat vse one maner of
exercyse but one in one maner / another
in another maner as they shall fele to be
mooste profyt able to them. Also as the ty-
me requyrez so dyuers exercyses are to
be vsed / for one maner of exercyses is ne-
cessary on the holy daye / another on the
feriall daye / one in tyme of temptacyon
another in tyme of peace & consolacyon /
one whan we haue swetnes in deuotiō /
Another whan deuocyon withdraueth.
Also agaynst principal feastes we ought
to be more delygente in good werkes
and deuoutly to call for helpe to the blcs-
sed sayntes that than be worshypped in
the Church of god / than in other ty-
mes and to dyspose our selfe in lyke ma-
ner as if we shulde than be taken out of
this worlde. And be brought i to the iust
lastynge feast in heuen. And sythe that
blyss is yet deferred from vs for a tyme
we maye well thynke that we be nat yet
redye ne worthy to come therto. And ther-
fore we ought to preparre our selfe to be
more redye another tyme / for as saynt

The fyfte boke. Folio. xxiij.

Take saythe. A Blessed is that scruaunt
whome our Lorde (whā he shall come at
the houre of dethe) shall fynde redy/for he
shall take hym and lyfte hym vp byghe a
boue all erthly thynges in to the cuerla-
stynge ioye and blesse in the kingdome of
Heuen. Amen.

¶ Of the loue of onelynes and seplence.

The. xx. Chapitre.

Seke for a conuynient tyme to
serche thyn owne conscience.
And thynke ofte on the bene-
faytes of god / leue of all curpous thyn-
ges. And rede suche maters as shall stee-
re the to cōpunction of herte for thy synnes
rather than to rede onely for occuppence
of the tyme/if thou wilt withdrawe thy
selfe frome superfluous wordes & fro vn-
profytable rennynges aboute & frome he-
rynge of rumours & of bayne tales/ thou
shalte fynde tyme conuynient to be occu-
pyed in holy meditations. The moste ho-
ly men & women that cuer were: fledde the
company of worldly lyupnge men vpon
theyr power/and chace to serue god in se-
crete of theyr herte / & one holy man sayd

The fyrste booke.

as ofte as I haue bene amonge worldly
company I haue departed with lesse fer-
uour of spirite than I came/and that we
knowe well whā we talke longe for it is
nat so harde to kepe alwaye scyence / as
it is not to excede in wordys whā we speke
moch. It is also more lyght to be alway
solitary at home / than to go forth in to
the worlde and nat offende. Therfore he
that intendeth to come to an inwarde set
tyng of his herte in god and to haue the
grace of deuocyon / muste with our sauy-
our Christe withdraue him from the peo-
ple. No man may surely appere amonge
the people / but he that wolde gladly be so-
litary if he myght / ne no man is sure in
prclacy / but he that wolde gladly be a sub-
get: ne none may surely cōmaūde / but he
that hath lerned gladly to obey / none
togeth treuly / but he whose herte wytnes-
seth hym to haue a clene consenec / ne
none speketh surely / but he that wolde
gladly kepe scyence if he myght. And al-
waye the suerte of good men and of bles-
sed men hath ben in mekenes and in the
dycede of god / and thoughe suche blessed
men shone in al vertue / yet they were nat
therfore lyfte vp in to pryde / but were

therfore the more diligent in the seruyce
of god and the more mche in all theyr do-
ynges/and on the contrary wyle the sure-
ty of euyl me tpleth of pryde and of pre-
sumpcion: in the ende it deceynerh the.
Therefore thynke thy selfe neuer sure in
this lyfe wether thou be religious or scer-
ler/for ofte tymes they that haue ben hol-
den in the syght of the people moste per-
fyte : haue bene suffered to fall more gre-
uoussye for theyr presumption / also it is
moche more profytable to many persons
that they haue somtyme tēptacions/lesse
haply they thynke them selfe ouermuche
syker and be therby lyfte vp in to pryde or
renne to schynge of outwarde consolaciō
Then that they be alwayes without tem-
ptaciōs. ¶ How pure a cōscience shulde
he haue that wolde dyspyse all transitory
tynges / & neuer wyl medle with worldly busy-
nes / and what peace and inwarde quiet-
nes shulde he haue that wolde cut a waye
from hym all busynes of mynde and only
to thynke on heuently thynges / no mā is
worthy to haue ghostely comfortes / but
he haue fyrste ben well exerceysed in holy
compunction/and if thou wylt haue com-
punction go in to a secrete place and put

from the all the clamours noyse of the
 world. For the prophet Dauid sayth
 Let the sorowe for thy synnes be done in
 thy secrette Chambr / i thy cell thou shalt
 fynde great grace whiche thou mayst
 lightly lese without. Thy cell well conty-
 nued shal ware swete and pleasaunt to the
 and shal be to the herafter a ryght dere
 frende / and if it be but euill kepte / it shal
 ware very redyous and pkesome to the.
 But if i the begynnyng thou be ofte ther
 in and kepe it well in good prayers and in
 holy meditations it shal be here after to
 the a synghuler frede and one of thy mooste
 speciall comfortes : in scilence and quiet-
 nes of herte a deuoute soule prosyete the
 moche and lerneth the beed sentences of
 scripture and fyndeth there : also many
 swete lectures in deuotion wherwith every
 nyght he washeth her myghtely from
 all fylth of syne that she may be so moche
 the more familer with god / as she is dys-
 serued frome the clamourous noyse of
 worldly busynes. Therefore they that for
 the loue of bettue withdrawe them from
 theyr acquaintaunce & from theyr world-
 ly frendes / our lord with his Angelles
 shal drawe nyghe to them & shal abyde

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxiii.

with them. It is better a mā be solitarie
and wel take hede of hym selfe. Than that
he do myracles in the worlde forgettyng
hym selfe. It is also a laudable thyng in
a religious persone / seldome to go forth /
seldom to se other / & seldome to be sene of
other / why wylte thou se that is nat law
full for the to haue / the worlde passeth a-
waye with all his concupyscence and de-
cepuable pleasures. Thy sensual a petye
moueth the to goo abrode; but whan the
tyme is past what bereste thou home a-
gayne but remorse of conscience and vn-
quietnes of herte. It is ofte sene that af-
ter a mery goynge forth foloweth a heuy
retournyng / & that a glade euentyde cau-
seth a heuy moynyng / and so all fleschely
ioye entereth pleasantly / but in the ende it
byteth & fleeth what mapste thou se with-
out thy cell that thou mayste nat se with-
in / so heuen & erthe and all the elementes
wherof all erthly thynges be made / and
what mapste thou cles. where se vnder
the sone that maye longe endure / & if thou
myghte se all erthly thynges & also haue
all bodely pleasures present at ones before
the / what were it but a vayne syght / yfste
by thyne eyne therefore to god in heuen

Impta.

D.ii.

The fyfte boke.

and praye hertely that thou mayste haue
forgyuenes for thy offense / leue vayne
thynges to them that wyl be vayne: and
take thou hede onely to tho thynges that
our lord commaundeth the. Shytte faste
the doore of thy soule / that is to say thyne
ymagynacio and kepe it warcly from be
holdynge of any bodely thyng as moche
as thou mayste: & tha lyfte vp thy mynde
to thy lord Jesu & open thy herte sayth-
fully to hym and abyde with hym in thy
Cell: for thou shalt nat fynde so moche
peace without. If thou haddest not gone
for the so moche as thou haste done / ne
haue gyue herpunge to vayne tales / thou
shuldest haue ben in moche more inward
peace tha thou arte / but for as moche as
it delyteth to the here newe thynges / it be
houeth the therfore to suffer scyeme both
trouble of herte & vnquietnes of mynde.

Of compuncion of the herte.

The. xxi. Chapitre.

If thou wylt any thyng pseye
to the helthe of thy soule / kepe
the alwaye in the drede of god
& neuer desyre to be fully at lyberty / but

The fyrste booke. Folio. xrb.

kepe the alwaye vnder some hollesome dys-
scplyne. Neuer gyue thy selfe to no vn-
discrete myrthe / for no waner of thyng
as nyghe as thou mayst. Haue perfyte
compunccion and sorowe for thy synnes/
and thou shalt fynde therby great inly de-
uocion. Compunccion openeth to the syghte
of the soule many good thyng / whiche
lyghtnes of herte and vaine myrthe / cone-
dymueth awaye. It is meruayle that any
man can be mery in this lyfe / if he consy-
der wel howe farre he is exyled out of his
countre: and howe great peryll his soule
dayly standeth in / but through lyghtnes
of herte / and negligence of our defautes
we fele nat: we wyl nat fele the sorowe
of our owne soule / but ofte tymes we
laughe whan we ought rather to wepe &
morne / for there is no perfyte liberty nor
true ioye / but in the drede of god and in a
good conscience. That persone is ryght
happie that hath grace to auoyde from
hym all thynges that letteth hym fro be-
holdyng of his owne synnes / and that
can tourne hym selfe to god by inwarde
compunccion / and he is happy also that
auoydeth fro hym all thynges that maye
offende or greue his conscience. Fyght

The fyfthe boke.

strongly therfore agaynst all synnes and
dredde nat ouermuche all though thou be
encombered by ad euill custome/for that
euill custome maye be ouercome with a
good custome. And excuse the nat that
thou arte let by other mē:for if thou wylt
leue the sampliarite with other:they wil
suffre the to do thy deds without impedimēt
Interpke the nat with other mē:cs goods
ne busy the nat in great menncs causes/
haue alwaye an eye to thy selfe and dply
gently enforme & admonyshe thy selfe by
fore all other. If thou haue nat the fa
uour of worldly luyngge people sorowe
nat therfore:but be this thy daily sorowe
that thou behaupt nat thy selfe in thy cō
uersaciō as it becometh a good relygious
person for to do. It is moche expedient &
more ppytable that a mā somtyme lacke
cōsolacions in his lyfe than that he haue
thē alwayes after his wyl namely fleshe
ly cōsolaciōs. Neuertheles that we haue
nat somtyme heuently cōsolaciōs or that
we so feldome fele them as we do. It
is througħ our owne defaute:for we seke
nat to haue the true cōpunction of herte
ne we caste nat fully awaye from vs the
falsē outwarde cōsolacions: holde thy

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxvi.

Selfe therfore vnworthy to haue any consolation and worthy to haue moche tribulation/whan a man soroweth perfectly for his synnes / than al worldly comforts be paynfull to hym. A good man synneth alway mater ynough why he oweth ryghtfully to sorowe & wepe/for if he behold him selfe or if he thynke on his neyghboure / he seeth wel that none lyueth here without great mysery and the more througely that he may cōsyder him selfe. The more sorowe he hath and alway the mater of true sorowe and of true my conpunctiō is the remēbraūce of our synnes wherwith we be so blyapped. on euery syde that seldome we maye beholde any ghostly thing. But if we wolde more oft thynke on our deth than we do on longe lyfe no doute but we shulde more saruently apply our selfe to amendement/ & I beleue also that if we wolde hertely remembre the paynes of Helle & of Purgatorye that we shuld more gladly susteyne all labours & sorowes and that we shulde nat drede any payn in this worlde with that we myghte auoyde the paynes that are to come. But for as moche as these thynges go nat to the herte & we yet loue the

The fyfte boke.

flaterynge and the false pleasures of this
worlde / therfore we remayne colde and
boyde of deuotion / and ofte it is through
the weykenes of the spirite that the wret
ched body so lyghtly cōplayneth. Praye
therfore makely to our lord / that he of
his great goodnes gyue the / the spirite
of compuncion / and say with the Pro
phete. **A** fede me lord with the brede of
cōpuncion / and gyue me to drynke water
of teares in great habundaunce.

Of the consyderinge of the mysery of
mankyng / and wherin the fe
licite of man standeth. The
xxii. Chapitre.

Awreche thou art where so euer
thou be / & where so euer thou
tourne the / but thou tourne
the to god / why arte thou so lyghtly trou
bled / for it falleth nat to the as thou wol
dest and desyrest / what is he that hath all
thyng after his wyll / neyther thou nor
he no man lyupnge / for none lyueth here
without some trouble or angur / he be he
Kynge or Pope. who thinkest thou is in
moſte fauour with god / truly he that suf

sereth gladly moste for god. But many p
sones wepke and teoble i spirite say thus
in theyr hertes. Lo how good a lyfe that
a mā ledeth how ryche he is / how mygh
ty he is / howe hyghe in auctorite / howe
great in syght of the people / howe faire
and beaucous in his bodely kynde / but
if thou take hede to the goodnes euerla
stygng / thou shalt wel se that these world
ly goodes and worldly lyknynges are but
lytell worthe & that they be more rather
grecuous than pleasaunt / for they maye
nat be had ne be kepte but by great la
boure and busynes of wynde. The felici
te of man standeth nat in abundaunce of
worldly goodes : for the meane is beste.
And verely to lyue in this worlde is but
mysery : and the more ghosly that a mā
wolde be / the more paynfull it is to hym
for to liue : wch he feleth the more playnly
the defaultes of mannes corrupcion / for
why : to eate / to drynke / to slepe / to wake /
to reste / to laboure / and to serue al other
necessytes of the body is great myserye
and great affliction to a deuoute soule.
whiche wolde gladly be fro the bounda
ge of synne that it myghte without lette
serue our lord in purety of cōscience and

The fyrste booke.

in clenness of herte. The inward man is greatly greued through the bodely necessities in this worlde. Wherefore the prophete Dauid desyred that he myght be deliuered fro suche necessities. But wo be to the that knowe nat theyr owne mysery & wo be to them that loue this wretched and this corruptible lyfe / for some loue it so moche that if they myghte euery lyue here though they myghte poorly gette theyr lyuing with labour and beggynge / yet they wolde neuer care for the kyngdom of heuen. * And madde and vnsaythfull creatures are they that so depely set theyr loue on erthlye thynges that they haue no felynge ne taste but in fleschly pleasures Truly i the houre of deith they shall knowe howe vyle & howe noughty it was that they so moch loved. But holy sayntes & deuoute folowes of Christe heeded nat what pleased the fleshe / ne what was pleasaunte i syght of the world. But all theyr hool intet and desyre they helde to thyngs inuysyble & fered lest by syghte of thynges visyble they myghte be drawen downe to the loue of them. * My welbeloued brother / lese nat the desyre to profyte in spirituall thyngs / for

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxviii
thou haste yet good tyme and space. why
wylt thou any lenger dyscure the tyme.
Arise & nowe this same instate begynne
and sape thus/nowe is tyme to labour &
good workes / nowe is tyme to fyghte in
ghostly batayle / & nowe is tyme to make
amendes for trespas passed / whan thou
art troubled than is beste tyme to merite
and gette rewardes of god. It behoueth
the to go through fyre and water or thou
mayste come to the place of recreation / &
but thou can fully haue the maystry ouer
thy selfe thou shalt neuer ouercom synne/
ne lyue without great teduousnes and so
eowe we wolde gladly be deliuered from
al misery and synne/but bycause we haue
throughe synne loste our innocensy. we
haue loste also the very ioye and felicity/
wherefore we muste holde vs in patience
and with good hope abyde the mercy of
god tyll wretchednes be ouerpassed: and
that this bodely lyfe be chaunged in the
euerlastyng. ¶ How great is the frail
ty of man that is euer redy and prone to
synne. This day thou arte confessed and
tomorrowe thou fallest agayne. Nowe
thou purposeste to be ware and inter-
esse to goo forth strongly in good

The fyrste boke.

Workes & shortly after thou doest as thou
neuer haddest taken suche purpoe / ryght
fully therfore we ought to make our selfe
and neuer to thynke in vs any vertue or
goodnes: for we be so frayle and so vnkas-
ble. None may it be losse throught negly-
gence / that with moche labour and speci-
al grace was hardly gottē / but what shal
become of vs in the ende whā we so sone
war dull and slowe. Sothely sorrowe and
wo shall be to vs if we fall to bodely reste
nowe as though we were in ghostly sy-
kernes. whan there appereth nat as yet
neither signe ne toke of vertue ne of good
lyuynge in our conuersacion. wherfore it
were expedient to vs that we were yet a-
gayne instructe as nouyces to lerne good
maners / if happely there myghte by that
meanes be founde hereafter any truste of
ou amendemēt and spirituall pꝛofyte in
our connerfacion.

Of the remembraunce of deeth.

The. xxiij. Chapitre.

The houre of deeth wil shortly
come: and therfore take hede
howe thou orderest thy selfe /

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxix.

for the comon prouerbe is true: to daye a
ma: to morowe none. And whā thou arte
out of syght thou art anon out of minde
and sone shalt thou be forgotten. O the
great dulnes and hardnes of manes hert
that onely thynketh on thynges presente
and lytell prouideth for the lyfe to come.
If thou dydest well/ thou shouldest so be-
haue thy selfe in euery dede and in euery
thought as thou shouldeste this instance
dye / if thou haddeste a good conscience
thou shouldest nat moche fere dethe. It
were better for the to leue synne than to
feare dethe. O my dere brother/ if thou
be nat redy this daye/ howe shalt thou be
redy to morowe. To morowe is a day vn-
certayne: & thou canste nat tell whether
thou shalt lyue so longe/ what profyte is
it to vs to lyue longe/ whan we thereby so
lytell amende oure lyfe / longe lyfe dothe
nat alwaye brynge vs in to any amende-
ment: but ofte tymes increaseth moze
synne/ wolde to god that we myghte be
one daye well conuersant in this worlde.
many rekyne they: peres of conuerson/ &
yet there is but lytell fente of amendemen-
te of any good example sene in they: con-
uersation / if it be ferefull to dye pera-

menture it is more perillous to lyne longe:
 blessed be to persons that euer haue the
 houre obdeth before they euen: and that
 euery daye dispose the selfe to dye: if thou
 euer sawest any man dye / remembre that
 thou must nedely go the same waye. In
 the morninge doute whether thou shalt
 lyue tyll nyght / and at nyght thinke what
 thy selfe shalt do tyll on the morowe.
 Be alway ready & lyue i such manner that
 deth fynde the nat unprouided. Remembre
 how many haue dyed today: & be pur-
 ded: for our lord hath called the in suche
 houre as they leest went. And when that
 laste houre shal come thou shalt begynne
 to feele al other wyse of thy lyfe passed: that
 thou hast done byfore: & thou shalt than
 sorowe greatly that thou hast bene so
 slowe & negligent in the seruise of god as
 thou hast ben. & O howe happy & wyse
 is he therfor that laboureth now to stode
 in suche state in this lyfe / as he wolde be
 fofidat at his deth. Truly a perfyte dysce-
 plynge of the worlde / & a seruent desyre to
 profyte in vertue / alone to be taughte a
 feutefull labourer in workes of penance / a
 ready wyll to obey / a full forsakyng of oue
 selfe / & a wyllfull sufferynge of all aduersite

ses for the loue of god / shall gyue vs a
 great truste that we shal dye well. Nowe
 whylest thou arte in helth thou mayst do
 many good dedes / but if thou be sycke I
 can nat tell what thou mayst do / for why
 fewe be amended throughte sykkenes / & in
 syke wyse they that go moche on pylgry-
 mage be seldome thereby made perfyte / &
 holy / put nat thy truste in thy frendes / &
 thy neighbours / ne differre nat thy good
 dedes tyll after thy deth for thou shalt so-
 ner be forgotten than thou wenyest / bet-
 ter it is to prouyde for thy selfe betyme &
 sēde some good dedes byfor the / than to tru-
 ste to other that pauētur wyllyghtly for-
 get the / if thou be nat now busye for thy
 selfe & for thyn owne soule helth: who shal
 be busye for the after thy deth. Nowe is
 thy tyme very precious / but alas for so-
 rowe that thou spendest the tyme so vn-
 profitable: & the which thou sholdest wyne
 the lyfe cuerlastyng. The tyme shal come
 whan thou shalt desyre one daye or one
 houre to amende the / but I wot nat whe-
 ther it shalbe graūted vnto the. & O my
 dere brother fro howe great peryl & drede
 myghtest thou nowe deliuer thy selfe / if
 thou woldest alwaye in this lyfe drede to

no 3
 folio

The fyrste booke.

offende god/& allwaye haue the cōpyngē
of deth suspecte. Therefore study nowe to
lyue so that at the houre of dethe thou
mayste rather ioy than drede/lerne nowe
to dye to the worlde that thou mayste thā
lyue with chryste/lerne also to dyspyse all
worldly thynges that thou mayste than
frely go to Chryste/chastice nowe thy bo-
dy with penauice that thou mayste than
haue a sure and a stedfastte hope of salua-
cion. Thou arte a foole if thou thynke to
lyue longe: syghe thou arte nat syker to
lyue one daye to the ende/howe many ha-
ue bene deceyued throughe truste of long
lyfe/and sodenly haue bene taken out of
this worlde or they had thoughte/howe
ofte haste thou herde say that suche a mā
was slayne/ and suche a man was drow-
ned: and suche a man fell and brake his
necke/this man as he eat his meate was
strangled / & this man as he played toke
his dethe/one with fyre:another with p-
ren:another with sykennes: and some by
these haue sodenly perished/and so the
ende of al mē is dethe/for the lyfe of man
as a shadowe sodenly dyeth & passethe
awaye/Thinke ofte who shall remembre
the after thy dethe/and wo that praye for

the/and do now for thy self all that thou
canst / for thou wottest not when thou
shalt dye nor what shall folowe after thy
deth: whylest thou hast tyme gather the
ryches immortal/ thy nke no thyng aby
dingly but on thy ghostly helth. Set thy
studye onely on thynges that be of god
and that belonge to his honour. Make
the frendes agaynst that tyme / worshyp
his sayntes & folowe theyr steppes / that
when thou shalt go out of this worlde
they maye receyue the in to the cuerla
stynge tabernacles. Kepe the as a pyl
gryme & as a straunger here in this worlde
to whom no thyng belongeth of worldly
besynes/kepe thy herte fre alway lyft vp
to god/for thou hast no cytie here longe
abydunge/send thy desyres & thy dayly
prayers alwaye vpwarde to god & pray
perseuerantly that thy soule at the houre
of deth/maye blessydly departe out of this
worlde and go to Christe.

¶ Of the laste Iugement and of the
payne that is ordayned for synne.

The. xxiii. Chapitre.

In all thynges beholde the
ende and ofte remembre howe
thou shalt stande byfore the
Iudgma.

E. i.

The fyrste boke.

hyghe Iuge to whō no thynge is hydder:
which wyl not be pleased with rewardes
ne receyue any maner excuses/ but in all
thynge wyl Iuge that is ryghtwylse &
true. O most vnwylse and most wretchyd
synner what shalte thou then answere to
god/ whiche knoweth all thy synnes and
wretchydnes/ sith thou dydest here som
tyme the face of a mortall man / why do-
ste thou not nowe prouyde for thy selfe
against that day/ sith thou mayst not the
be excusyd ne defendyd by none other.
no) But euery man shall then haue ynoughe
to do to answer for hym self. Now thy la-
bour is frutefull/ thy wepyng is accepta-
ble/ thy mournyng is worthy to be herde
and thy sorow also is satysfactorye and
pourgynge of synnes. The pacient man
whiche sufferyth of other iniuries and
wronges/ and yet neuer theles soroweth
more for theyr malyce then for the wōg
done to hym selfe / hath a holsome and a
blessyd purgatorye in this worlde/ and so
haue they that gladly cā praye for theyr
enmyes / and for them that be contra-
ryous vnto them/ and that in theyr herte
can forgyue those that offende them and
tary not longe to aske forgyuenes. And

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxxii.

so haue they also that more lyghtely be
foryed to mercede then to vengeance/and
that can as it were by a violence breke
downe theyr owne wyll and strongly res-
yste synne / and labour allway to subdue
theyr bodye to the spyryte. It is better
nowe to putte synne and to put awaye
byce then to reserue it to be purged here
after / but verily we deceyue our selfe by
inordinate loue that we haue to our bodye
ly kynde/what shall the fyre of purgato-
rye deuoure but thy sinne truly nothing
Therefore the more thou sparyst thy selfe
nowe / and the more thou folowest thy
fleshely lyfynge / the more greuously
shall thou wayle hereafter/and the more
mater thou reseruest for the fyre of pur-
gatorie. In such thinges as a man moste
hath offendyd shall he most be punysshed:
the slouthfull persons shall be there pyk-
kyd with brennyng pykkes of proude/and
glotens shall be tourmented with great
hunger and thirst. The lecherous perso-
nes and louers of voluptuous pleasures
shall be fulfylled with brennyng peche &
hyrmstone / and enuious persons shall
wayle and howle as both woode dog-
ges. There shall no synne be without his

Amptis

E.ii.

*fyre of
purgat
torye*

The fyfste boke.

proper tourmēt. The proude mā ſhal be
fulfyllyd with all ſhame & confuſyon/and
the coueytous man ſhal be pynyd with
penurpe & nede one howre there in payne
ſhal be more greuous then here a hon-
dredth yere in moſte ſharpeſt penaunce.
There ſhal be no reſt ne conſolaciō to dā-
pned ſoules. But here ſomtyme we ſele
releſe of our paynes & haue ſomtyme con-
ſolaciō of our frendes. Be now ſorrowfull
for thy ſynnes that at the daye of Iuge-
mente thou mayſte be ſyker with bleſſyd
ſaintes/The ſhall ryght wyſe men ſtonde
in great cōſtaunce agaynſt thē that haue
wzonged them & oppreſſyd thē here. The
ſhall he ſtande as a Iuge that here ſub-
mittyth hym ſelfe mekely to the iugemēt
of man. Then ſhall the meke poore man
haue great confidence and truſte in god
& the obſtynate proude man ſhall quake
& drede. Then ſhall it appere that he was
wyſe in this worlde / that for the loue of
god was cōtentyd to be takē as a fool &
to be diſpyſed & ſet at nought. The ſhall
it alſo pleaſe hym moche the trybulacion
that he ſufferyd patiently in this worlde/
& al wyckidnes ſhal ſtop his mouth. The
euery deuoute perſon ſhall be ioyfull and

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxxiii.

glad & the vnrelgyuous psons shall way
le & drede. The shall the fleshe that hath
be with discrecyon chastysyde ioye more
Than if it had ben noysshed with all de
lectacion and pleasure. Then shall the vy
le habyte thynne clere in the syght of gods
and the precyous garmentes shall ware
foule and lothsom to beholde. Then the
poore cotage shall be more alowed the the
palayes ouer gylted with gold. The shall
more helpe a constante pacyence / then all
worldlye power & ryches. The shall meke
obedyence be exaltid more hyghe: the all
worldlye wysdome and polacye: & then
shall a good clene consciere make vs more
glad some and mery / then the cunnyng
of all philosophye. Then the dyspyssyng
of worldly good; shall be more of valure
then all worldly ryches and treasure.
Then shalt thou haue more cōforte for
thy deuoute prayeng / then for all thy deli
cate fedynge. Then shalt thou also ioy
more for thy scilence keepynge / the for thy
longe talkynge & iangelynge. Then good
dedes shall plentuously be rewarde / &
fayre wordes shall lptell be regardyd.
Then shall it please more a strait lyfe &
harde penaunce here / than all worldly

The fyrste boke.

delectacion & pleasure. Lerne nowe therfore to suffre the small trybulaciō in this worlde that thou mayste then be deliuered from the greater there ordeyned for synne. Fyrste proue here what thou mayste suffre hereafter. And if thou mayst not now suffre so lytell a payne / howe shalte thou then suffre the euerlastyng tormentes / and if nowe so lytell a passyon make the impacient what shall then do the intollerable fyre of purgatorie or of hell. Thou mayst not haue two heuens / that is to say to ioye here & to haue delectaciō here / and after to ioy also with christe in heuen. More ouer if thou haddest luyd alway vnto this day in honoures and in selfhelp delectacions: what shulde it profite the now if thou shuldest this present instant departe the worlde. Therefore althyng is banyshe / but to loue god and to serue him / be that luyth god with al his herte / dyeth neyther deth / tourment / iugement ne helle / for a persyte loue makyth a sure passage to god / but if a man yet decayeth in synne it is no meruayle though he dyede both deth & helle. And though he suche a dyede be but a thralle dyede / yet nevertheless it is good that yf the loue of

The fyrste boke. Folio. xxxiij.
god withdrowe vs not fro synne that the
dyede of hell constreyn vs therto: he that
settyth apart the dyede of god: may not
long stande in the state of grace/ but soon
shall he renne in to the snare of the fende
& lyghtly shall he therewith be deceyued.

¶ Of the seruent amendynge of all our
lyfe and that we shall specially take hede
of our owne soule helthe byfoze all
other. The. xxv. Chapitre.

W I sone be wakyng & dyspygent
in the seruyce of god / & thynke
ofte wherfore thou art come / &
why thou haste forsaken the worlde / was
it not that thou shuldest lyue to god / and
be made a spyrituell man / yes truely.
Therefore styre thy selfe to perfeccion for
in shorte time thou shalt receyue the full
rewarde of all thy labours / and from
thensforth shall neuer com to the sorowe
nor dyede: thy labour shall be lytell and
shorte / and thou shalt receyue therefore
agayne euerlastynge rest & cōfōrte: if
thou abyde faythfull and seruent in good
dedes without doute our lord will be
faythfull & lyberall to the in his rewards.

The fyrste booke.

Thou shalt alway haue a good truste
that thou shalt come to the palme of vic-
tory/but thou shalt no see the in a full sy-
hernes/therof lest haply thou wast dulle
and proude in herte : A certayne person
which oftymes doubted whether he were
in the state of grace or not/on a tyme fell
prostrate in the churche and sayth thus.
710 That I might knowe whether I shuld
perseuer in vertue to the ende of my
lyfe. And anon he harde inwardly in his
soule the answere of our lordes sayenge/
what woldest thou do if thou knewest
thou shuldest perseuer do now as thou
woldest do the / and thou shalt be saue/&
so anon he was comfortyd and commyt-
ted hym self holly to the wyl of god and
all his doutfulnes cessyd/and neuer after
wolde he curiously serche to knowe what
shulde be come of hym/but rather he stu-
dyed to knowe what was the wyl of god
agaynst hym / and how he myght begyn
and ende al his dedes that he shulde do to
the pleasure of god and to his honour.
Truste in god & do good dedes sayth the
prophete Dauid/inhabyte the erth/ and
thou shalt be fedde with the ryches of thy
good dedes. But one thyngewithdraweth

many from profyting in vertue & from
amendement of lyfe/that is an horroure &
a fals worldly drede that they maye not
sbyrbe the payne and labour that is ne-
cessfull for the gettyng thereof. Therefore
they shall mooste profyte in vertue byfoze
all other that enforce theym selfe mygh-
tely to ouercome tho thynges that be mo-
st greuous and mooste cōtraryous to thē.
For a man profiteth there most and there
wynneth mooste grace where he mooste o-
uercommeth hym selfe / and wherin he
mooste mortyfeth his bodye to the soule.
But all men haue not in lyke moche to
mortyfyre and ouercome : for some haue
moore passyons then some haue. Neuerthe-
lesse a feruent louer of god though he haue
more greater passyons then other / yet
shall he be more strōger to profyte in ver-
tue then a nother that is better manered
and that hathe fewer passyons but he is
lesse feruent to vertue. Two thynges helpe
a man moche to amendement of lyfe /
that is a myghty withdralwyng of hym
self from tho thynges that the bodye
mooste inclyneth hym to/and a feruent la-
boure for suche vertuous as he hathe
moost neede of. Studie also to ouercom in

The fyrste booke.

thy selfe tho thynges that most myslike
the in other men. And take alwaye som
specyall profyte in euery place where so
euer thou becom / as yf thou se any good
example enforce the to folowe it / and if
thou se any euill example loke thou es-
chewe it / as thy iape consydereth the wor-
kes of other / ryght soo and in the same
wyse thy workes be consyderyd of other.
How ioyous and howe delectable is it
to relygyous men deuoute and feruent in
the loue of god well maneryd and well
taught in ghostly lernynge / and on the
contrary wyse howe heuy and sorowfull
is it to se them lyue inordynately not vs-
synge to thynges that they haue chosyn
and taken them to. Also howe inconue-
nient a thyng it is a man to be negli-
gent in the purpose of his fyrste calling.
And to set his mynde to thyngs that be
not commytted to hym. Thyne oft ther-
fore on the purpose that thou haste taken
and set before the eye of thy soule the
mynde of christes passyon / and if thou be
holde well / and delygently his blessyd
lyfe thou mayste well be a shampd that
thou hast no more conformed the to hym
then thou hast done / he that wyll inwar-

The fyfte boke. Folio. xxv. l.

help and deuoutely exerceyse hym selfe in
the moost blessyd lyfe and passyon of our
lorde Iesu Chryste / waltre fynde therein
plentuously all that is necessary for him/
so that he shall not nede to seke any thing
without hym. & if Iesu crucifyed were
ofte in oure hertes and in oure remem-
braunce we shulde soon be leynyd in all
thynges that be necessarie for vs. A good
religgyous man that is seruent in his re-
lyggyon takyth the all thyng well and doth
gladly all that he is commaundyd to do.
But a religgyous person that is neely-
gent and slouthfull hath trouble vpon
trouble and sufferyth great anguysshe &
payne on euery syde / for he lacketh the
true inwarde comforte and to seke the out-
warde comforte he is prohybryeth. Ther-
fore a religgyous person that lyueth wit-
hout dyscyplene is lyke to falle to great
ruyne. Also he that in religgyon seketh to
haue lybertie and releasyng of his de-
wtye shal alwaye be in anguysshe & sorowe
for one thyng or other shall euer displea-
se hym. Therfore take hede howe other
religgyous persones doo that be ryghte
steytly kept vnder the rules of theyr re-
liggyon. They go seldom forth/they lyue

The fyrste boke.

hardly / they etc poorly / and be clothyd
grossely / they labour moche / speke lytel /
watche longe / tye cry / make longe pra-
yers / rede oft and kepe them selfe alwaye
in some holsom doctryne . Scholde the
Chartuspences and the Cysteur and ma-
ny other Monkes / & Nunnes of dyuers
relygyons / Howe they tye euery nyght
to serue oure lorde / And therfore it were
great shame to the that thou shuldest wax
slowe and dull in so holy a warke whe-
re soo many laude and prayse oure lorde
O howe Joyous a lyfe were it if we shul-
de nothyng els do but with herte and
mouthe contynuely to prayse our lorde /
nowe truely yf we shulde neuer nedde to
ete / drynke / ne slepe but that we might al-
way laude hym and oonly take to spyry-
tuell studyes / then were we moche more
happye and blessyd then we are nowe
when we are bounden of necessity to ser-
ue the body . O wolde to god that these
bodely mercyes were tournyd in to spiry-
tuell refecryons whiche alas for sorowe
we taste but soldom / when a man is com-
men to that perfeccion that he sekith not
his consolacyon in any creature / then be-
gynneth god fyrste to sauer swete vnto

hy
eu
or
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in
dye
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byd
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beg
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of
shal
then
and
all
nour
and
sweet
fle
falle
glad

The fyrste booke. Folio. xxxviii.

hym / and then he shalbe contentyd with
euery thyng that cometh be it lykynge
or mylkyng. And then he shall not be
glad for no worldly profyte be it neuer so
great ne soyr for the wantynge of it for
he hath set hym selfe and stablyshed him
self holly in god the whiche is to hym all
in all / to whom nothyng peryssheth nor
dyeth / but all thyng lyueth to hym and
seruyth hym without cessynge after his
byddynge. In euery thyng remembre the
ende and that tyme losse can not be cal-
led agayn without labour and dyligen-
ce thou shalt neuer gette vertue If thou
begyn to be necligent thou begynnest to
be feble and weyke / but if thou applie the
to fatuoure / thou shalt fynde great helpe
of god and for the loue of vertue thou
shalt fynde lesse payne in all thy labours
then thou dyddest fyrste / he that is seruēt
and louinge is alway quicke and redy to
all thyngs that be of god and to his ho-
nour. It is more labour to resyst byces
and passyons / then it is to swynke and
swete in bodely laboures / he that wil not
fle small synnes / shall by lytell and lytell
falle in to greater. Thou shalt alway be
glad at nyght when thou haste spent the

The fyrste boke.
day byfore frutefully. Take hede to thy
selfe and styre thy self alway to deuocyon
admonyshe thy self / & what souce
thou do of other forget not thy
selfe / and so moche shalt
thou profite in vertue
as thou canst breke
thyne owne wyl
& folowe the
wyl of
god.



..

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The seconde boke. Folio. xxxviii.
Here beginneth the seconde boke,
of inwarde conuersacyon,
The fyfste Chapitre.



The kyngdome of god
is within you sayth Christe
oure sauoure. Turne the
therfor with all thy herte to
god and forsake this wret-
chyd worlde / and thy soule shall fynde
great inwarde reste/lerne to dyspyse out-
warde thynges and gyue thy selfe to in-
warde thynges and thou shalt se the
kyngdō of god come in to thy soule. The
kyngdom of god is peace and lope in the
holy ghost that is not graunted to wyc-
ked people/oure lordc Jesu Christe wyll
come to the and wyll shewe to the his cō-
solacyons / if thou wylte make redy for
hym withynforth a dwellynge place/and
all that he desyret in the is withynforth
and there is his pleasure to be. There is
byt wyrt almyghty god / and a deuoute
soule many ghostly vysptyngs / swete in-
worde spckynge / great gyftes of grace
many consolacyōs / moche heuenly peas
& wonderous samplaryte of the blessyd

The seconde booke.

presence of god. Therefore thou saythfull
soule prepare thy herte to Christe thy
spouse: that he may come to the and dwell
in the for he saith him selfe who so loueth
me shall kepe my commaundemēt. And my
father and I & the holy ghoste shall come
to hym & we shall make in hym our dwell
lynge place / gyue therfore to Christe fre
entrein to thy herte: and kepe out al thin
ges that letteth his entre: and whē thou
art ryche ynough and he oonly shall suffi
ce to the / and then he shall be thy prouy
der and defender and thy saythfull hel
per in euery necessity so that thou shalt
not nede to put thy truste in any other
without hym / man is soon chaunged / &
lyghtly fallyth away / but Christe aby
deth for euer and standeth strongly with
his louer vnto the ende. Ther is no great
truste to be put in man that is but mozt
fall & frayle though he be ryght moche
profytable and also moche belouyd vnto
the / ne any great heynenes to be taken
though he sometime turne and be agaynst
the / for they that this day be with the to
morrowe may happen to be agaynst the
and maye ofte turne as dothe the wynde
put thy full truste therfor i god / & let hym

be thy loue and drede about all thynges:
and he wyl answere for the and wyl do
for the in all thyng: as shalbe most nede-
full and moſte expedient for the. Thou
haſte here no place of long abydyng / for
where ſo euer thou become thou arte but
a ſtraunger and a pylgryme and neuer
ſhalte thou fynde perſepte reſte tyll thou
be fully oned to god / why doſte thou loke
to haue reſte here ſyth this is nat thy re-
ſtyng place / thy full reſte muſte be in heuē
ly thynges / and all erthly thynges thou
muſte beholde as thynges tranſitory and
ſhortly paſſyng awaye / and be well ware
thou cleue nat ouer moche to them : leſte
thou be taken with loue of them and in
the ende periſhe therby. Let thy thought
be alwaye upwarde to god / and directe
thy prayers to Chriſte continually / and
if thou may nat for frailte of thy ſelfe al-
waye occuppe thy mynde in contempla-
cion of the godhede: Be than occupied
with mynde of his paſſyon : and in his
blessed woundes make the a dwellynge
place / and if thou ſe deuoutely to the
wounde of Chriſtes ſyde and to the mar-
kes of his paſſyon thou ſhalte ſele greate
ſoſorte in euery trouble. And ſhalte yt tell

Imita:

F. i.

The seconde boke.

forre thoughe thou be openly dispised in
the worlde/and what euill wordes so euer
be spoken of the they shal lytel greue the.
Our maister Christe was dyspysed in the
worlde of all men and in his mooste nede
was forsaken of his acquayntaunce and
frendes and lefte amonge shames and re
bukes. He wolde suffre wronges and be
nought set by of the worlde: and we wyll
nat that any persone doo vs wronge ne
dispraysc our dedes. Christe had many
aduersaries and backbityoures / and we
wolde haue all to be our frendes and lo
uers: Howe shulde thy pacience be crow
ned in heuen. If no aduersitye shulde by
fall to the in erthe : if thou wylte suffre
none aduersitye: howe mayst thou be the
frende of Christe. It behoneth the so suf
fre with Christe / and for Christe if thou
wylte reygne with Christe. Truly if
thou haddest ones entred in to the bloody
woundes of Iesu : and haddest there tas
ted a lytell of his loue/thou shuldest lytell
care for lphynge or mylphynge of the
worlde / but thou shuldest rather haue
great ioye whan wronges and reproues
were done vnto the / for perfyte loue of
god maketh a man perfyte to dyspysc

hym selfe. The true inward loue of god
that is fre from all inordynate affections
may anone tourne hym self frely to god/
and lyfte hym selfe vp in spirite in contem-
placion & frutefully reste hym in Christe.
Also he to whome all thinges be esteemed
as they be/and nat as they be taken and
thought to be of worldly people / is very
wyse & is rather taught of god thā of mā
And he that can inwardly lyfte his minde
bpwardly to god & can lytell regarde out-
warde thing; nedeth nat to seke for time
or place to go to prayers : or to do other
good dedes or vertuous occupaciōs. For
the ghostly mā may sone gather him selfe
together and fyxe his mynde in god / for
he neuer suffereth it to be fully occupied
in outwarde thynges. And therfore his
outwarde laboures and his worldly oc-
cupacionis necessary for the tyme/hyndre
hym nat but lytell / for as they come so
he applyeth hym selfe to them and refer-
reth the alway to the wyll of god. More-
ouer a man that is well ordered in his
soule/forseth lytel the vnkynde demeaner
of worldly people ne yet theyr proude be-
hauoure. As moche as a man loueth any
worldly thig more thā it shuld be beloued

The seconde boke.

so moche his mynde is hyndred and let-
ted for the true ordynate loue that he
shulde haue to god / if thou were wel pur-
ged fro all inordynate affections / than
what so euer shulde befall to the shulde
tourne to thy ghostly profyte and to the
great encreasynge of grace and vertue in
thy soule / but the cause why so many thi-
ges displease the and trouble the / is for
thou arte nat yet parfytely deede to the
worlde: ne thou arte nat yet fully seuered
from the loue of erthly thynges / and no
thyng so moche defouleth the soule: as
an vnclene loue to creatures / if thou for-
saie to be comforted by worldly thynges
outwardly thou mayst beholde more par-
fytely heuently thynges / and thou shalt
than syng contynually laudes and pray-
synges to hym with greute ioye and in-
warde gladnes of herte. The whiche
graunte the and me the blessed Trinite.
Amen.

Of a man's knowyng of our owne
defautes. The. ii. Chapitre.

Begarde nat moche who is with
the: no: who is agaynst the / but
be this thy greateste study that

god may be with the in euery thyng that thou dost/haue a good consyence and he shall well defende : and who so euer he wyl helpe and defende there may no mallice hynder ne greue : if thou can be styll and suffre a whyle thou shalt without doute se the help of god come in thy nede he knoweth the tyme and place howe to deliuer the / and therfore thou muste resygne thy selfe hooly to hym. It pertyneth to hym to helpe and to deliuer from all confusyon . Neuertheles it is ofte tymes moche profytable to vs for the more surer keepinge of mekenes / that othet men knowe our default; and reprove vs of them . whan a man meketh hym selfe for his offenses / he lyghtly pleaseth other and lyghtly reconcileth hym selfe to them that he hath offended. The meke man / almyghty god defendeth and comforteth : to hym he inclyneth hym selfe and sendeth hym great plēty of his grace to hym : also he helpeth his secrettes and loupngly he draweth hym to hym / and after his oppressyons he lyfteth hym vp to glory. The meke man whan he hath suffered cōfusyon and reprove / is in good peace : for he trusteth in god and nat in

The secoude boke.

the worlde. Moreover if thou wylt come
to the hyghnes of perfection: thynke nat
thy selfe any thyng pryncyple in vertue
till thou can fele mekely in thy herte that
thou haste lesse mekenes and lesse vertue
than any other hath.

¶ Howe good it is for a man to be
peacefull. The. iiii. Chapitre.

Firste put thyselfe in peace / and
than thou mayst the better paci-
fy the other / a peacefull man and a pa-
cient pryncyple more to hym selfe and to
other also / than a man well lerned that is
vnpeacefull. A man that is passionate
tourneth ofte tymes good in to euill and
lyghtly beleueth the worse parte. But a
good peacefull man tourneth all thynges
to the best: and hath suspencion to no mā/
but he that is nat contente is ofte trou-
bled with many suspicious: and neyther
is he quyet hym selfe / nor yet suffereth he
other for to be quiet / he speket oft tymes
that he shulde nat speke / and he omitteth
to speke / that were more expedient to be
spoken: he consydereth greatly what
other be bounden to do / but to that that

he is bounden to hym selfe he is full negligent / haue therfore fyrste a zeale and a respecte to thy selfe and to thyne owne soule / and thã thou mayst the more ryght wysely and with the more due order of charite haue zeale vpon thy neighboures. Thou arte anoneredy to excuse thyne owne defautes / but thou wylte nat here the excuses of thy brytherne. Truly it were more charitable and more profyttable to the that thou shuldest accuse thy selfe and excuse thy brother: For if thou wylte be bozne-bere other / beholde howe farre thou arte yet fro perfyte mekenes & charite: whiche can nat be angrye with none but with them selfe. It is no great thyng to be well cõuersaunte with good men & with tractable men: for that naturally pleaseth all people / and euery man gladly hath peace with the & most loucheth them that folowe their appetite / but to lyue peacably with euyll men & with forward men that lacke good maners & be vntaught & that be also cõtrarious vnto vs / is a great grace and a manly dede & moche to be praised for it can nat be done but throught great ghostly strenght. Some persones can be quyet the selfe & also can

The seconde booke.

lyue quyetly with other / and some can
nat be quyet the selfe: ne yet suffre other
to be quyet/they be greuous to other/but
they be moze greuous to them selfe. And
some can kepe them selfe in good peace/
and can also bring other to lyue in peace/
and neuertheles all our peace whyles we
be in this mortall lyfe: standeth moze in
meke sufferynge of troubles and of thinges
that be contraryous vnto vs: than in the
nat felyng of the. For no man may lyue
here without some trouble. And therfore
he that can beste suffre shall haue moste
peace / & it is very true overcome of hym
selfe / the lord of the worlde / the frende
of Christe/and the true enheritour of the
kyngdome of heuen.

Of a pure mynde and a symple
intente. The. iiii. Chapitre.

MAn is borne by fro erthly thinges
with two wynges/that is
to say: with plaines & clenness
plaines is in the entente / and clenness is
in the loue / the good true & playne in-
tente loketh towarde god / but the clene
loue taketh assaye & tasteth his swetnes.

The seconde boke. Folio. xliiij.

If thou be free from all inordinate love
there shall no good dede hinder the / but
that thou shalt therewith increase in the
waye of perfection. If thou entend well
and seeke nothinge but god and the pros-
fite of thyne owne soule and of thy neigh-
bours / thou shalt haue greate inward
libertye of mynde. And if thy herte be
strayte with god: Can euery creature
shalbe to the a myrrour of lyfe and a booke
of holy doctryne / for there is no creature
so lytell ne so vyle : but that it sheweth
and representeth the goodnes of god.
Also if thou were withinsorth i thy soule
pure and clene / thou shuldest than with-
out lettynge take all thynges to the beste.
A clene herte perceith both heuen and hel
Suche as a man is in his conscience in-
wardly / suche he sheweth to be by his out-
warde conuersacion. If there be any true
ioye in this worlde: that hath a man of a
clene conscience. And if there be any where
tribulacion or anguysh: an euill con-
science knoweth it best. Also as yron put
in to the fyre is clenched fro ruste and is
made all clene and pure / ryght so a man
tourneyng hym selfe hooly to god is pur-
ged fro slothfulnes & slothfully is chaun-

The seconde boke.

ged in to a newe man. whan a man begynneth to waxe dull & slowe to ghostly busynes/ than a lytell labourer fereth him greatly / and that he taketh gladly outward cōfortes of the worlde and of the fleshe/ but whan he begynneth perfyte to ouercome hym selfe & to walke strōgly in the waye of god / thā he regardeth tho labours but lytel/ that befoze he thought were ryght greuous and as importable vnto hym.

¶ Of the knowynge of our selfe.

The. v. Chapitre. *

We may nat truste moche i our selfe: ne in our owne wyt / for oft tymes thzough our pꝛesumpcion we lacke grace: and ryght lytell lyght of true vnderstandyng is in vs / and that we haue many tymes / we lese thzough our negligence / and yet we se nat/ ne we wyll nat se howe blynde we are. Ofte tymes we do euyl / and in defense therof we do moche worse/ and somtyme we be moued with passyon and we wene it be of a iele to god / we can anone reprene small defaultes in oure neyghbours: but our

The seconde booke. Folio. xliiii.

owne defautes that be moche greater we
wyl nat se / we fele anone and ponde
greately what we suffre of other / but
what other suffre of vs we wyl nat con-
syder / but he that wolde well and ryght-
wysely iuge his owne defautes : shulde
nat so rygourously iuge the defautes of
his neyghbours. A man that is inward-
ly tourned to god taketh hede of him selfe
before all other / and he that can well
take hede of hym selfe : can lyghtly be
styl of other mennes dedes. Thou shalte
neuer be an inwarde man and a deuoute
folower of Chyste : but thou can kepe
the fro medelynge of other mennes de-
des and can specially take hede of thyne
owne. If thou take hede hooly to god
and to thy selfe / the defautes that thou
seest in other shall lytell moue the. where
arte thou whan thou arte nat presente to
thy selfe / and whan thou haste all renne
aboute and moche haste considered o-
ther mennes workes. what haste thou
profyted therby if thou haue forgottē thy
selfe: if thou wylte therfore haue peace in
thy soule and be perfyte oned to god in
blessed loue set a parte all other mennes de-
des and onely set thy selfe & thyne owne

The seconde booke.

vedes before the eye of thy soule and that thou seest amysse in the : shortly to reforme it. Thou shalt moche profyte in grace if thou kepe the fre frō al temporal cures / and if shalt hyndre the greatly if thou set pryce by any temporal thynges. Therfore let nothyng be in thy syght hyghe/nothyng great/nothyng lykynge acceptable to the but it be purely good or of good. Thynke all comfortes bayne that come to the by any creature/he that loueth god and his owne soule for gods dispiseth all other loue for he seeth well that god alone whiche is eternall incomprehensible and that fulfylleth all thyngs with his goodnes / is the hōle solace and cōforte of the soule: and that he is the very true gladnes of herte and none other but onely he.

¶ Of the gladnes of a clene cōscyence.
The. vi. Chapitre.

The glorie of a good man / is the wytnesse of god: that he hath a good cōscyence/haue therfore a good cōscyence & thou shalt allway haue gladnes. A good cōscyence

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The seconde boke. Folio. xlv.

may bere many wronges & it is euer me-
ry and glade in aduersityties/ but an euill
conscience is alway ferefull and vnquiet.
Thou shalteste the swetely and blessed
ly: if thyne owne herte reprove the nat.
Be neuer glade but whan thou hast done
well. Euill men haue neuer persyte glad-
nes: ne they fele no inwarde peace. For
our lord sayth: ¶ There is no peace
to wycked people. And though they say
we be in good peace there shall no euill
come to vs. To who may greue vs or
hurte vs / byleue them nat: for sodenly
the wrath of god shall fall vpon them but
they amende/ and all that they haue done
shall tourne to nought / and that they
wolde haue done shall be vndone. It is
no greuous thyng to a feruente loue of
god to ioye in tribulacyon / for al his ioy
and glozpe is to ioye in the crosse of our
lorde Iesu Chryste: It is a shorte glozpe
that is gyuen by man: and comenly some
heuyenes foloweth shortly after. The ioye
and gladnes of good me is in theyr owne
conscience/ and the ioye of ryght wyseme
is in good / and of god / and theyr ioye is
in vertue & in good lyfe he that despyeth
the very persyte ioye that is cuerlastyng

The seconde boke.

setteth yt tell pyce by temporall ioy / and
he that seketh any worldly ioye or dorthy
nat in his herte fully despyse it / sheweth
hym selfe openly to loue but yt tell the ioy
of heuen. He hath great tranquillite and
peace of herte that neyther regardeth
prayles ne disprayles. And he shall sone
be pacified and content that hath a good
conscience. Thou arte nat the better for
thou arte prayfed : ne the worse for thou
arte disprayfed / for as thou arte : thou
arte / and what so euer be said of the : thou
arte no better than almyghty god whiche
is the searcher of mannes herte wyl
wytnes the to be / if thou beholde well
what thou arte inwardly : thou shalt nat
care moche what the worlde speketh of
the outwarde. Man seeth the face / but
god beholdeth the herte. Man beholdeth
the dede / but god beholdeth the intent of
the dede. It is a great token of a meke
herte : A man euer to do well / and yet to
thynke hym selfe to haue done but yt tell.
And it is a great sygne of cleynes of lyfe
and of an inwarde truste in god whan a
man taketh nat his comforte of any crea
ture : whan a man seketh no outwarde
wytnes for hym selfe / it appereth that he

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The seconde booke. Folio. xlvj.

hath hooly comytted hym selfe to god.
¶ Also after the wordes of saint Paule:
He that comendeth hym selfe is nat ius-
tified/ but he whome god comendeth and
he that hath his mynde allwaye lyfte vp
to god / and is nat bounden with any in-
ordinate affection withoutforth/ is in the
degre and in the state of a holy & a bless-
ed man.

¶ Of the loue of Iesu aboue all thinges.

The. vii. Chapitre

Blessed is he that knoweth how
good it is to loue Iesu / and for
his sake to dyspse hym selfe. It
behoueth the louer of Iesu to forsake all
other loue besyde hym / for he wyll be lo-
ued only aboue al other. The loue of crea-
tures is deceynable and saylyng/ but the
loue of Iesu is saythfull & allwayes aby-
dngc / he that cleueth to any creature
muste of necessitye fayle as doth the crea-
ture / but he that cleueth abydyngly to
Iesu shalbe made stable in hym for euer.
Loue him therfore & holde him thy frende
for whā all other forsake the he wyll nat
forsake te ne suffre the finally to perishe
Thou muste of necessitye be departed fro

The seconde booke.

thy frendes and from all mānes cōpanye
whether thou wylte or nat and therfore
kepe the with thy lord Iesu lyving and
dyeng and cōmyt the to his sydelite and
he wyl be with the and helpe the whan
all other forsaake the. Thy beloved is of
suche nature that he wyl nat admyt any
other loue / for he wyl haue alonely the
loue of thy herte and wyl spt therein as a
kyng in his proper thione. If thou couldest
well auoyde frō the: the loue of creatures:
he wolde allwape abyde with the
and neuer wolde he forsaake the. Thou
shalte in maner fynde it all as losse what
soeuer truste thou haste put in any maner
of thyng besyde Iesu / put nat thy
truste therfore to suche thyng as is but
a quel full of winde or as a holowe stycke
whiche is nat able to susteyne the: he to
helpe the / but in thy moste nede wyl de-
ceyue the / for man is but as hay / and all
his glory is as a floure in the felde / whiche
sodeynly vanyssheth & flydeth away.
If thou take hede onely to the outwarde
apparaunce thou shalte sone be deceyued
and if thou seke thy cōforte in any thyng
but in Iesu / thou shalte fele therby great
spirituall losse. But if thou seke in all

The fyrste booke.

Folio. xlvi.

thynges thy lord Iesu/thou shalt truely
synde thy lord Iesu/and if thou seke thy
selfe thou shalt synde thy selfe / but that
shall be to thyne owne great losse / for tru-
ly a man is more greuous and more hurt
full to hym selfe if he seke nat his lord
Iesu: than is al the worlde / and more thā
all his aduersaries may be.

Of the familie frendshyppe of Iesu.
The. viii. Chapitre.

Whan our lord Iesu is presente all
thyng is lykynge and nothyng se-
meth harde to do for his loue / but
whā he is absente all thinge that is done
for his loue / is paynfull and harde / whan
Iesu speketh nat to the soule there is no
faytfull consolacion / but if he speke but
one worde onely / the soule selethe great in-
warde comforte / dyd nat mary Magda-
lyne ryle sone from wepyng whan Mar-
tha shewed her that her mayster Ihesu
was nyghe and called her : yes truely.
¶ That is an happy houre whā Iesus
called vs from wepyng to ioye of spirite.
Remembre howe dyce and howe vnde-
uoute thou arte without Iesu / and howe

Impta.

B. i.

The seconde boke.
vnwyse/howe wayne/and howe conynge
thou arte whan thou desyreth any thyng
besyde Iesu. Truly that desyre is more
hurtfull to the: than if thou haddest losse
all the world/what may this world gyue
the:but throughte the helpe of Iesu. To
be without Iesu is a payne of hell. And
to be with Iesu is a pleasaunt paradysc:if
Iesu be with the / there may no enemye
greue the/and he that fyndeth Iesu syn-
deth a great treasure that is beste aboue
all other treasures / & he that leseth Iesu
leseth very moche and more than all the
world/he is most pooze that lyucth with
out Iesu/& he is most ryche that is with
Iesu. It is great conynge to be well co-
uersaunt with Iesu / and to kepe hym is
ryght great wysdom / be meke & peacefull
& Iesu shall be with the/be deuout & quiet
& Iesu wyl abyde with the. Thou maiste
anone dryue awaye thy lord Iesu & lese
his grace / if thou applye thy selfe to out-
warde thynges / and if throughte negly-
gence of thy selfe thou lese hym what frend
shalt thou than haue: without a frende
thou mayste nat longe endure/and if Je-
su be nat thy frende moste byfore al other
thou shalt be very heuy and disolate/& be

The seconde booke. Folio. xlviij.
lette without all perfyte frenshyppe/ & the
fore thou doest nat wisely if thou truste or
loye in any other thyng be syde hym/ we
shulde rather chose to haue all the worlde
agaynste vs thā to offende god: and ther-
fore of all that the to be lefe and dere let
thy lorde Jesu be the moste lefe and dere:
and moste specially beloued to the aboue
all other/ and lett all other be beloued for
hym: and he onely for hym selfe: Jesus is
onely to be beloued for hym selfe/ for he is
onely proued good and saythfull before
all other frendes. In hym: and for hym:
bothe euemyes & frendes are to be belo-
ued/ and before all thynges we ought me-
kely with all dyligence to praye to hym
that he may be beloued and honoured of
all his creatures. Neuer coueyt to be syn-
gulerly loued or comended/ for that belon-
geth onely to god whiche hath none lyke
vnto hym/ and desyre nat that any thing
be occupied with the in thy herte/ ne that
thou be occupied with loue of any crea-
ture/ but that thy lorde Jesu may be i the
& in euery good mā and woman: Be pure
and clene withynforth without lettynge
of any creature as nyghe as thou can for
it behouethe the to haue a ryghte clene

The seconde boke.

and a pure herte to Iesu. If thou wylt knowe and fele howe swete he is/ and verely thou mayste nat come to that purete but thou be prevented & drawen through his grace/ and that all other thynges set aparte thou be inwardly knytte & oncede to hym: whan the grace of god commeth to a man that is he made myghty and stronge to do euery thyng that belongeth to vertue / and whan grace withdraweth/ than is he made weyke and feable to do any good dede / and is in maner as he were lefte onely to payne and punysshementes. And if it happen so with the/ dyspaire nat ouermoeche therfoze: nor leue nat thy good dedes vndone: but stonde alwaye strongly after the wyll of god / & tourne all thynges that shall come to the to the laude and praisynge of his name for after wynter cometh somer/ and after the nyght cometh the dape/ and after a great tempeste/ sheweth agayne ryghte clere and pleasaunt weder.

¶ Of the wantynge of all solace and conforte. The. ix.

Chapitre.

IT is no great thyng to dyspyse
mannes comforte whan the cō-
forte of god is present : but it is
a great thyng and that a ryght great
thyng a man to be so stronge in spirite
that he may bere the wantynge of them
bothe / and for the loue of god and to his
honoure to haue a redy wyll to bere as it
were a desolacion of spirite / and yet in no
thyng to scke hym selfe ne his owne me-
rytes / what profe of vertue is it if a man
be merie and deuoute in god whan grace
commeth and vpsyteth the soule / for that
houre is despyed of euey creature / he ry-
deth right safely whom the grace of god
bereth and supporteth and what merueil
is it if he fele no bourdē that is borne vp
by hym that is almyghty and that is led
by the souerayne guyde that is god hym
selfe / we be alwaye glad to haue solace &
consolacion but we wolde haue no tribu-
lacion / ne we wyll nat lyghtly caste from
vs the false loue of our selfe. The blessed
martyr saint Laurence throughe the loue
of god myghtly ouercame the loue of the
worlde and of hym selfe / for he despyed
all that was lphynge & delectable in the
worlde / and Sixtus the pope whome he

The seconde boke,
moste loued for the loue of god he suffered
mekely to be taken fro hym / & so through
the loue of god he ouercame the loue of
man / and for mānes conforte he chose ra-
ther to folowe the wyll of god: do thou in
lyke wyse and lerne to forsake some neces-
sary / and some welbeloued frende for the
loue of god : & take it nat greuously whā
thou arte lest or forsakē of thy frēde / for
of necessitye it behoueth worldly frendes
to be dysseuered . It behoueth a man to
fyghte long and mightely to stryue with
hym selfe or that he shall lerne fully to o-
uercome hym selfe / and or that he shal fre-
ly and redely sette all his desyres in god,
whan a mā loueth hym selfe & moche tru-
steth to hym selfe: he falleth anone to mā-
nes confortes : but the very true loucr of
Christe & the dplygent folower of vertue
falleth nat so lyghtly to thē ne seketh nat
moche suche sensible swetnes ne suche bo-
dely delytes / but rather is glad to suffer
great harde labour & payne for the loue
of Christe. Nevertheless whā ghostely cō-
fortes is sent to the of god take it mekely
and gyue thankynges mekely for it : but
know it for certayn that it is of the great
goodnes of god that sendeth it to the / &

nat of thy descriupnge/ & loke thou be nat
lyfte vp therfore in to pryde/ne that thou
ioy nat moche therof ne psume nat bayn-
ly theri: but rather that thou be the more
meke. For so noble a gyfte and the more
ware and the more ferfull in all thy war-
kes/for that tyme wyl passe awaye/and
the tyme of temptation wyl shortly fol-
we after. whan conforste is withd:awen
dyspayre nat therfore/ but mekely and pa-
ciently abyde the visitation of god/for he
is able & of more power to gyue the more
grace and more ghostely conforste than
thou haddest fyrste. Suche alteration of
grace is no newe thyng/ne no strayne
thyng to thē that haue had experiece in
the way of god / for in great sayntes & in
holy p:ophetes was many tymes solide
lyke alteration / wherfore the p:ophete
Dauid saith. *Ego dixi in habūdancia
mea: nō moueboz in eternū.* * That is to
saye: whā Dauid had habūdānce of gho-
stly conforste he sayd to our lord/that he
trusted he sholde neuer be remoued from
suche conforste / but after whā grace with-
drew: he sayd. *Quertisti faciem tuā a
me: & fact⁹ sum cōturbat⁹.* * That is: O
lorde thou haste withd:awen thy ghostly

The seconde boke.

cōfortes frō me / and I am leste in great
trouble and heuines: and yet wēuertheles
he dyspayred nat therfore/ but prayed her
tely vnto our lordc and sayd . ¶ Ad te
domine clamabo et ad deum meum depre
cabor: That is to saye I shall busely crye
to the lordc / and I shall mekely praye to
the for grace and cōforte . And anone he
had the effecte of his prayers as he wryt
necesseth him selfe sayng thus . ¶ Audiuit
dominus et misertus est mei dominus fa
ctus est adiutor meus: that is to saye/ our
lordc hath harde my prayer/ & hath had
mercy on me/ and hath nowe againe sent
me his helpe & ghostely cōforte. And ther
fore he saith afterwarde: lordc thou haste
toured my sorowe i to Joy/ & thou haste
belapped me with heuenly gladnes and
if almyghty god hath thus done with ho
ly saintes/ it is nat for vs wepke and fea
ble persons to dyspayre though we som
tyme haue seruoure of spirite and be som
tyme leste colde and boyde of deuocion.
The holy ghost goth and cōmeth after
his pleasure & therfore the holy mā Job
sayth: ¶ Lordc thou graciously visitest
thy louer in the morowe tyde / that is to
saye in the tyme of comforte/ and sodein

The seconde boke. Folio. li.

ly thou prouest hym that is to say i with
drawyng suche comfortes from hym /
wherin than maye I truste or in whome
may I haue any confidence / but onely in
the great endles grace and mercy of god
for wy: the company of good men / ne the
felyshype of deuout betherne and fayth-
full frendes / ne the haupnge of holy bokys
or of deuoute treatises / ne yet the herpyng
of swete songes : or of deuoute Impnes /
may lytell auaple and bypunge forth but
lytell comforte to the soule whan we are
leste to our owne fraylty and pouerty.
And whā we be so leste there is no better
remedy but pacyence with a hool resygn-
yng of our owne will to the wyl of god.
I neuer founde yet any religious person
so pfyte / but that he had somtyme absen-
tyng of grace or some mynyshyng of fer-
uour / and there was neuer yet any sainte
so hyghly rauyshed but that he fyrste or
laste had some temptacyon / he is nat wor-
thy to haue the hyghe gyfte of cōtempla-
cion / that hath nat suffered for god some
trybulacion. The temptacions goyng be-
fore / were wonte to be a soughaste toke of
heuenly comforte shortly comming after.
And to them that be soude stable in theyr

The seconde boke.

temptaciōs is promised by our lord great
consolacion/and therfore he sayth thus.
He that ouercōmeth I shal giue him
to eat of the tre of lyfe. & Heuēly cōforte
is somtyme gyuē to a mā that he may af
ter be more stronge to suffre aduersities/
but after foloweth temptaciō that he be
nat lyfte by i to pryde & thinke that he is
worthy suche consolacion. The ghostely
enemy slepeth nat ne the flesshe is nat yet
fully mortified / & therfore thou shalt ne
uer cesse to prepayre thy selfe to ghostely
batayle for thou haste enemyes on euery
side that euer wyl be redy to assaile the/ &
to let thy good purpose all that they can.

Of yeldynge thanks to god
for his manyfolde grace.

The .x. Chapitre.

Why sekest thou reste here syth thou
warte bozne to labour / dyspose thy
selfe to pacienec: rather than to con
fortes / to bere the crosse of penaunce : ra
ther than to haue gladnes: what tempo
rall man wolde nat gladly haue spiritu
all cōfortes if he myght alway kepe thē:
for spirituell cōfortes creede far al world
by delectes and all bodely pleasures/ for al

The seconde booke. Folio. lii.

worldly delytes be epyther soule or baphe
but ghostely delytes are onely wounde &
honeste/brought forth by vertues & sent
of god in to a cleane soule. But suche con-
fortes no man may haue whan he wold/
for the tyme of tētacion tarieth nat lōge.
The false lybertye of wyl and the ouer-
moche truste that we haue in our selfe/be
moche contrary to the heuenly visitaci-
ons. Our lord dothe well in sendynge
suche confortes/but we do nat well/whā
we yelde nat all the thankes therfore to
hym againe. The greatestt cause why the
giftes of grace maye nat lyghtly come to
vs/is for we be unkinde to the gyuer and
yelde nat thākes to hym from whome all
goodnes cometh. Grace is alway gy-
uen to them that be redy to yelde than-
kes therfore agayne. And therfore it shal
be taken from the proude man that is
wonte to be gyuen to the meke man: I
wolde none of that consolaciō that shuld
take from me compunctiō/ne I wolde
none of that contemplaciō that shulde
lyfte my soule in to presumption. Euery
hyghe thing in syght of man is nat holy
ne euery desyre is nat cleane and pure/ne
euery swete thing is nat good/ne all that

The seconde boke.

is lefe and dere to man is nat alway plea-
fant to god/ we shal therfore gladly take
suche gyfte wherby he shalbe the more re-
dy to forsake our selfe and our owne wyl/
he that knoweth the cōfortes that come
through the gyfte of grace/and knoweth
also howe sharpe and paynfull the absen-
tyng of grace is: shall nat dare thynke
that any goodnes cometh of hym selfe
but he shall openly confesse that of hym
selfe he is ryght pore and naked of al ver-
tue/pelde therfore to god that is his/ and
to thy selfe that is thyn that is to saye/
thāke god for his manyfolde graces and
blame thy selfe for thy offenses. Holde in
the alway a sure grounde and a sure foun-
dacion of mekenes: and thā the hyghnes
of vertue shall shortly be gyuen vnto the
for the hyghe tournē of vertue maye nat
longe stande/but it be borne vp with the
lowe foundacion of mekenes. They that
be moſte great in heuen be leste in theyr
owne syght / and the more glorioſus they
be/the meker they are in them selfe/ful of
truthe and of heuēly ioye / nat despyous
of any baynglopy or prayſynge of man.
Also they that be groundely stabled & cō-
firmed in god maye in no wyse be lyft vp

The seconde boke. Folio. liii.

in to pryde/and they that ascribe al goodnes to god/seke no glozy ne bayne pray-sunges in the worlde/but they desyre only to ioy and to be glorified in god and desire i herte that he may be honoured/lauded/and praised/aboue all thynges both i hym selfe and in all his saintes/and that is alwaye the thyng that perfyte men moste coueyte and moste desyre to byng aboute/ be thou loupng and thākefull to god for the leest benefyte that he gyueth the/and thā thou shalt be the more apte and the more worthy to receiue of hym more greater benefautes. Thynke the leest gyfte that he gyueth is great & the moste dyspylable thynges take as specyall gyftes and as great tokens of loue/for if the dygnyte of the gyuer be well consydered no gyfte that he gyueth shall seme lytell. It is no lytell thyng that is gyue of god for though he sende paine and sorowe we shulde take them gladly and thankfully: for it is for our ghostely helth all that he suffereth to come vnto vs. If a mā desyre to holde the grace of god be he kinde and thankfull for such grace as he hath receyued / paryent whan it is withdrawen praye he deuontely that it maye shortlye

The seconde booke.
come agayne / & thā be he meke & lowe in
sprite that he lefe it nat agayne througly
his presumption and pryde of herte.

Of the smale nombre of the
louers of the crosse. The. xi.
Chapitre.

Iesu hathe many louers of
his kyngdome of heuen but he
hath fewe berers of his crosse/
many desyre his consolacion / but fewe de-
syre his tribulacion: he spndeth many fe-
lowes at eatyng & drynkynge / but he spy-
deth fewe that will be with him in his ab-
stynēce & fastyng / all mē wolde ioy with
Christe / but fewe wyl any thyng suffer
for Christe / many folowe hym to the bre-
kyng of his breade for theyr bodely refre-
cion but fewe wyl folowe hym to drynke
a draught of the Chalice of his passyon.
Many merueile and honour his myra-
cles / but fewe wyl folowe the shame of
his crosse: and of his other vilantes / ma-
ny loue Iesu as longe as no aduersite so-
loweth to them: and can prayse hym and
bless hym whan they receyue any beny-
fayts of hi / but if Iesu a lytel withdraue

hym from the/and a lytell forsaketh the
 anone they fall to some great grudgynge/
 or to ouer great deieccion / or in to open
 desperation/but they that loue Iesu pu-
 rely for hym selfe and nat for theyr owne
 profyte nor commodyte/they blesse hym
 as hartely in temptacion and tribulation
 and in all other aduersites:as they do in
 tyme of consolacion. And if he neuer sent
 them consolacion / yet wolde they alway
 laude hym and prayse hym. ¶ How
 maye the loue of Iesu do to the helpe of
 a soule if it be pure and cleane nat myrte
 with any iordinate loue to hym selfe true-
 ly nothyng more : May nat they than
 that euer loke for worldly confortes and
 for worldly consolacions be called world-
 ly marchauntes and worldly louers ra-
 ther than louers of god/do they nat open-
 ly shewe by theyr dedes that they rather
 loue them selfe than god/yes truely. ¶
 Where may be founden any that wil serue
 god frely and purely without lokyng for
 some rewarde for it agayne. And where
 maye be founde any so spirituall / that he
 is clerely deliuered and byaste from loue
 of hym selfe / and that is truely poore in
 spirite and is hooly auoyded from loue of

The seconde booke.

creatur. I trowe none suche can be solid but it be far hens and in far countreis/ if a man gyue all his substance for god/ yet he is nought and if he do great penauunce for his synnes/ yet he is but lytell: and if he haue great connyng and knowlege/ yet he is far from vertue/ and if he haue great vertue and bycynnyng deuotion/ yet moche wāteth hym/ and that is specially one thyng/ whiche is moste necessary to hym/ what is that: that all thynges forsa ken and hym selfe also forsakyn/ he go cle rely out from hym selfe & kepe no thyng to hym selfe of any pruate loue / & whan he hath done all that he ought to do that he fele in hym selfe as he had nothyng done ne that he thynke it nat great that some other myght thinke great: but that he thynke hym selfe truely as he is an vn profytable seruaūt. ¶ For the auctoure of trouthe our sauoure Christ saith. whā ye haue done all that is cōmaundyd you to do: yet saye that ye be but vnprofytable seruauntes. Thā he that can thus do may wel be called poore in spirite & naked of pruate loue/ and he may well say with the prophete Dauid. ¶ I am onede in god and am poore & meke i herte. There

The seconde booke. Folia. 15.
is none more ryche, none more fre / ne
none of more power / than he that can for
sake hym selfe and all passyng thynges /
and that truly can holde hym selfe to be
lowest and bylest of all other.

Of the waye of the crosse / and howe
profitable pacience is in aduersite.

The. xii. Chapitre.

The wordes of our sauour be
thought very harde and gre-
uous : whan he sayth thus.
For sake your selfe take the crosse and
folowe me. But it shalbe moche more
grecious to here these wordes at the laste
Iugement. So ye from me ye cursed
people in to the fyre that euer shall laste.
But to that nowe gladly here and fo-
lowe the wordes of Christe wherby he con-
cepleth them to folowe hym : shall nat
than nedes to drede for hetynge those wor-
des of euerclastyng dampnacyon. The
sygne of the Crosse shall appere in heuen
whan our lord shall come to Iuge the
worlde / and the seruantes of the Crosse
whiche confirmed them selfe here in this
lyfe to Christe crucified on the Crosse /
Impta. H. 1.

110 The seconde booke.

Shall go to Christe they: iuge with great
 fayth and truste in hym / why dost thou
 tha drede to take this crosse syth it is the
 very way to the kyngdome of heuen: and
 none but that. In the crosse is helth / in
 the crosse is lyfe / in the crosse is defence
 fro our enemies / in the crosse is infusion
 of heuenly swetnes / in the crosse is the
 strength of mynde / the ioy of spirite / the
 hyghnes of vertue / and the full perfectiō
 of all holynes: and there is no helthe of
 soule nor hope of euerlastyng lyfe: but
 through vertue of the crosse. Take ther-
 fore the crosse and folowe Iesu: and thou
 shalt go in to the lyfe euerlastyng / he
 hath gone before the: beryng his crosse /
 and dyed for the vpo the crosse / that thou
 shuldest in lyke wyse bere with hym the
 crosse of penaunce and of tribulaciō / and
 that thou shuldest be redy lyke wyse for
 his loue to suffre deth if nede requyre as
 he hath done for the. If thou dye with
 hym: thou shalt lyue with him / and if
 thou be felowe with hym in payne: thou
 shalt be with him in glozy. Beholde tha
 howe in the crosse standeth all and howe
 in dyeng to the worlde lyeth al our helth
 and that there is no other waye to lyfe

true inwarde peace but the waye of the
 crosse & of daily mortifying of the body to
 the spirite. So whether thou wylte and
 seeke what the lyst & thou shalt neuer finde
 aboute the: ne byneth the/within the: ne
 without the/more hygh / more excellent/
 ne more sure way to Christe thā the way
 of the holy crosse/dispose euery thyng af-
 ter thy wyl/ & thou shalt neuer fynde but
 that thou must of necessitye sō what suffre
 eyther with thy wyl or agaynst thy wyl/
 and so thou shalt alway fynde the crosse
 for either thou shalt fele payne i thy body
 or in thy soule thou shalt haue trouble of
 spirite. Thou shalt be somtyme as thou
 were forsaken of god. Somtyme thou
 shalt be vexed with thy neyghboure/ and
 that is yet more paynsful/thou shalt som-
 tyme be greuous to thy selfe/ & thou shalt
 fynde no meane to be deliuered/but that
 it behoueth the for to suffre tyll it shall
 please almyghty god of his goodnes o-
 therwysse to dyspose for the: for he wyl
 that thou shalt lerne to suffre trybulaciō
 without consolaciō but thou mayst ther-
 by lerne holly to submitte thy selfe to him
 and by trybulaciō to be made more iuche
 than thou were fyrste. No man selety

The seconde boke.

the passyon of Chryste so effectuously/as
he that feleth lyke payne as Chryste dyd.
This crosse is alway redy & euerie where
it abydeth the / and thou mayst nat fle it
ne fullpescap it where euer thou become
so: where so euer thou become thou shalt
bere thy selfe aboute with the and so thou
shalt alway fynde thy selfe. Tourne
the where thou wilt aboute the & beneth
the: within the and without the / & thou
shalt fynde this crosse on euerie syde / so
that it shalbe necessary for the that thou
alway kepe the in patience / and that it
behoueth the to do if thou wylte haue in-
warde peace / and deserue the perpetuall
croune in heuen / if thou wylte gladly
bere this crosse it shall bere the and it shal
brynge the to the ende that thou desyre
where thou shalt neuer after haue any
thyng to suffre: And if thou bere this
crosse agaynst thy wyl: thou makest a
great burden to thy selfe / and it wyl be
more greuous to the and yet it behoueth
the to bere it / and if it happen the to put
away one crosse / that is to say one try-
bulacyon: yet surely a nother wyl come
and happely more greuous thā the fyrste
was. Troweste thou to escape that neuer

yet any mortall mā myght escape. what
 Sainte in this worlde hath ben without
 this crosse and without some trouble.
 Truly our lordc Iesu was nat one houre
 without some sorowe & payne as long as
 he lyued here / for it behoued hym to suf-
 fre deth and to ryse agayne & so to entre
 in to his glory / and howe it is than that
 thou sekest any other way to heuen than
 this playne hygh waye of the crosse. All
 the lyfe of Christe : was crosse and mar-
 terdome / and thou sekest pleasure & ioy:
 Thou erreth greatly if thou seke any o-
 ther thyng than to suffre: For all this
 mortall lyfe is full of myseryes and is all
 beset aboute and marked with crosses/
 and the more hyghly that a man profy-
 teth in spirite the more paynfull crosses
 shall he fynde / for by the sothfastnes of
 Christes loue wherein he daily increaseth
 dayly appereth vnto him more and more
 the payne of this crule. But neuertheles
 a man thus vexed with payne is nat left
 hooly without all conforte / for he seeth
 well that great frute and hygh rewarde
 shall growe vnto hym by the beryng of
 his crosse : And whan a man frely sub-
 mytteth hym selfe to suche trybulacyon /

The seconde booke.

than all the burden of trybulacion is so
deply touned in to a great truste of he-
uently cōsolaciō. And the more the flesshe
is punysshed with trybulacion / the more
is the soule strengthened dayly by inwarde
consolacion / and somtyme the soule shall
fele suche cōforte in aduersyties / that for
the loue and desyre that it hath to be con-
formed to Christe crucified it wolde nat
be without sorowe and trouble / for it con-
sydereth well that the more that it may
suffre for his loue here / the more accepta-
ble shall he be to him in the lyfe to come.
But this working is nat in the power of
man : but through the grace of god that
is to say that a frayle man shulde take
and loue that his bodily kynde so moche
abhorreth and fleeth / for it is nat in the
power of mā gladly to bere the crosse / to
loue the crosse / to chastyce the body and
to make it burum to the wpll of the spi-
rite / to fle honoures gladly to sustayne re-
preses / to dyspyse hym selfe and to coueyt
to be dyspyled / patiently to suffre aduers-
yties with all displeasures therof / and
nat to desyre any maner of profite in this
worlde / if thou truste in thy selfe thou
shalt neuer byng this mater aboute : but

The seconde booke. Folio. lviij.

if thou truste in god / he shall sende the
strength from heuen: and the worlde and
the flesh he shall be made subiecte to the: yea
and if thou be strongly armed with faith
and be marked with the crosse of Christe
as his householde seruante thou shalt nat
nede to feare thy ghostly enemy for he shall
also be made subiecte to the: so that he
shall haue no power agaynst the. Purpose
thy selfe therfore as a true faythfull
seruante of god to bere manfully the crosse
of thy lord Iesu: that for thy loue was
crucified vpon the crosse / prepare thy
selfe to suffer all maner of aduersities and
discomodities in this wretched lyfe / for
so shall it be with the where so euer thou
hyde the: there is no remedy to escape/
but that thou muste kepe thy selfe alway
in paciēce/ if thou desyre to be a deare and
a welbeloued frende of Christe: drynke
affectuouly with hym a draught of the
chalice of his trybulacion. As for conso
lacions committe them to his will that he
order them as he knoweth most expedient
for the / but as for thy selfe: and for as
moche as in the is / dispose the to suffer
whan tribulacions come take the as spee
ial consolacions. Saying with the Apostle.

The seconde booke.

thus. ¶ The passion of this worlde be
nat worthy of them selfe to bypge vs to
the glory that is ordeyned for vs in the
lyfe to come. And that is true though one
man alone myght suffre asmoeche as all
men do suffre/whā thou comest to that
degre of paciēce : that trybulacyon is
swete to the and for the loue of god is sa-
uoury and pleasurable in thy syght / than
mayst thou truste that it is well with the
and that thou art in good estate for thou
hast founde Paradyse in erthe. But as
long as it is greuous to the to suffre and
thou sekest to fle / so longe it is nat well
with the:ne so longe thou arte nat in the
perfyte way of paciēce/but if thou couldest
brynge thy selfe to that estate that
thou shuldest be at/that is to suffre gladly
for god and to dye fully to the worlde
than it shulde shortly be better with the
and thou shuldest fynde great peace / but
yet all thoughe thou were rapte with
Paule i to the thyrde heuē;thou shuldest
nat therfore be sure without al aduersite.
For our sauoure speaking of saint Paule
after he had ben rapte in to heuē : sayde
thus of hym. ¶ I shall shewe him howe
many thynges he shall suffre for me. ¶

To suffre therfore remaineth to the if thou wylte loue thy lord Iesu and serue hym perpetually: woloe to god that thou werte worthy to suffre som what for his loue. O howe great ioy shulde it be to the to suffre for hym/what gladnes to al the saintes of heuē: and howe great edifyng to thy neyghboure/all men cōmende patience/ & yet fewe men wyl suffre. Right wysly thou oughtest to suffre some lytell thyng for god that sufferest moche more for the worlde. And knowe this for certayne that after this bodily deeth / thou shalt yet lyue / and the more that thou canste dye to thy selfe here the more thou begynnest to lyue to god. No mā is apte to receyue the heuēly rewardes / but he haue fyrste lerned to bere aduersyties for the loue of Christe for nothyng is more acceptable to god/ nor more profitable to man in this worlde thā to be glad to suffre for Christe/ in so moche that if it were put in thy election / thou shuldest rather chewe aduersity thyn prosperite/ for thā by the pacient sufferynge therof thou shuldest be the more lyke to Christe / and the more conformed to all his sayntes. Our merite and our perfection of lyfe standeth

The seconde boke.

nat in consolacions and swetenes / but rather in sufferynge of great greuous aduersytees and tribulacions. For if there had ben any nerer or better way for the helth of mannes soule than to suffre / our lord Iesu wolde haue shewed it by wordes / or by examples. But for there was nat / therfore he openly croxted his disciples that folowed hym : and all other that desyred to folowe hym : to forsake theyr owne wpll & to take the crosse of penaunce and folowe hym. Saynge thus. ¶ who so wpll come after me : forsake he his owne wpll : take he the crosse & folowe he me. ¶ Therfore all thynge scribed and red / be this the fynall conclusion / that by many tribulacions it behoueth vs to entre in to the kyngdome of heuen / to the whiche bynge vs our lord Iesus. Amen.



The thyrde boke. Folio. lx.

Here begynneth the thyrde boke
Of the inwarde spekyng of Christe
to a saythful soule. The fyrste
Chapitre. **A**



Ishal take hede sayth
a deuoute soule and I shal
here what my Lorde Iesu
shall speke in me. Blessed
is that man which hereth
Iesu spekyng in his soule:
and that taketh of his mouth som worde
of cōforte / and blessed be tho Eares that
here the secrete rownynges of Iesu / and
hede nat the deceytfull rownynges of
this worlde : And blessed be the good
playne eares that hede nat the outwarde
speche / but rather take hede what god
speketh and teacheth withinforth in the
soule. Blessed be tho eyen also that be
shut from sight of outwarde vanities and
that take hede to the inwarde mouynges
of god. Blessed be they also that gette
them vertues and prepayre the by good
bodily & ghostly warkes to receiue dayly
more & more the secrete inspiracions and

The thyrde boke.

inwarde teachynges of god. Also blessed
be they that set them selfe hooly to serue
god and for his seruyce set apparte all let
tynges of the worlde. ¶ And thou my soule
take hede to that is sayd before / and shut
the doores of thy sensualities that are thy
h. wytttest that thou mayst here inwardly
what our lord Iesu speket in thy soule.
Thus sayth thy beloued. ¶ I am thy
helth / I am thy peate / I am thy lyfe /
keepe the with me / and thou shalt fynde
peate in me / forsake the loue of trasitory
thynges: and seeke thynges that be euer-
lastyng. ¶ what be all temporall thynges
but deceyuable / and what may any crea-
ture helpe the : if thy lord Iesu forsake
the. Therefore all creatures & all worldly
thynges forsaken and lefte : do that in the
is / to make the pleasaunte in his syght
that thou mayst after this lyfe come to
the euerlastyng lyfe in the kyngdome of
heuen. Amen.

¶ Howe almyghty god speket in-
wardly to mannes soule without
sounde of wordes. ¶

The seconde

Chapitre

Speke lord / for I thy seruante
am redy to here the. I am thy
seruaunte gyue me wysdome
and vnderstandyng to knowe thy coman-
dementes. Bowe my herte to folowe the
wordes of thy holy teachings that they
may distyll in to my soule as dewe in to
the grasse. ¶ The chyldren of Israell
sayd to Moyses / speke thou to vs and we
shall here the : but let nat our lord speke
to vs lest haply we dye for drede. ¶ Nat
so lord nat so I beseeche the / but rather
I aske mekely with Samuell the prophete
that thou vouchesafe to speke to me thy
seife and I shall gladly here the / let nat
Moyes ne none other of the prophetes
speke to me / but rather thou lord that
arte the inwarde inspirour and gyuer of
lyght to all prophetes / for thou onely
without them mayst fully enforme me &
instructe me. They without the may ly-
tell profyte me. They speke thy wordes
but they gyue nat the spirite to vnder-
stande the wordes. They speke saye / but
if thou be still they kyndle nat the herte.
They shewe saye letters / but thou decla-
rest the sentece. They bypunge forth great
hygh mysteries / but thou openest therof

The thyrde boke.

the true vnderstandyng they declare thy
cōmaundement; / but thou helpest to per-
fōrme the. They shewe the way but thou
guydest cōforte to walke therein. They do
all outwardly / but thou illumineſt & in-
formest the herte withi. They water one
ly withoutforth / but thou guydest the in-
warde growyng. They crye all in wordes
but thou guydest to the hearers vnderstan-
dyng of the wordes that be harde. & Let
nat Moyses therfore speke to me / but
thou my lordc Iesu that arte the euerla-
styng trouth: lest haply I dye & be made
as a man without frute warned without
forth and nat enflamed within: and so to
haue the harder iugemēt for that I haue
herde thy worde & nat done it / knowē it &
nat loued it / bylcued it & nat fulfilled it.
Speke therfore to me thy selfe for I thy
seruaūte am redy to here the. Thou hast
the wordes of eternall lyfe speke the to me
to the full cōforte of my soule & gyue me
amendement of all mē lyfe past to thy loy
honoure & glory euerlastyngly. Amen.
¶ That the wordes of god are to be herde
with great mekenes / and that there be
but fewe that ponder them as they
ought to do. The.iii. Chapitre.

The thyrde boke.

O I sone sayth our lord here my
wordes and folowe them for
they be moſte ſwete far paſſing
the wyſdome and connyng of all philoſo
phers & of al the wyſe men of the worlde.
My wordes be ſpiritual and ghofly and
can nat be fully cōprehended by mannes
wyt ne they are nat to be tourned ne to
be applyed to the vayne pleaſure of the
herer / but are to be herde in ſcylence
with great mekenes and reuerence and
with great inwarde affection of the hert
and alſo in greate reſte and quyetnes of
body and of ſoule. O bleſſed is he lord
whome thou enſormest and teacheſte ſo
that thou mayſte be mcke and mercyfull
lord vnto hym in the euyl daye / that is
to ſaye in the daye of the moſte dredfull
iugement / that he be nat than leſte de
ſolate and comforteles in the lande of
dampnation. Than ſayth our lord a
gayne. I haue taught prophetes
fro the begynnyng: and yet I ceſſe nat to
ſpeke to euery creature / but many be deſe
and wyl nat here / and many here the
worlde more gladly thā me / & more light
ly folowe the appetite of the fleſhe / than
the pleaſure of god. The worlde puniſeth

The thyrde boke.

temporal things of smale valure and yet
he is serued with great affection, but god
prompteth his thynges : and thynges
eternall and the hertes of the people be
slowe and dull. O who serueth and obey-
eth god in all thinges with so great desyre
as he doth the worlde and as wordly priu-
ees be serued and obeyed I trowe none.
For why? For a lytell prebende / greete
iournayes be taken. But for the lyfe euer
lastyng the people wyl sharshly lyfte their
fete ones from the grounde. A thyng
that is of smale pryce many tymes is busi-
scly sought / and for a peny is somtyme
great stryfe / and for the promise of a ly-
tell wordly profyte men eschewe nat to
swynke and sweate both day and nyght.
But alas for sorowe for the goodes euer
lastyng and for the rewarde that may
nat be esteemed by mannes hertes / and for
the hygh honoure and gloze that neuer
shall haue ende. We be slowe to take any
maner of payne or laboure. We thou ther-
fore ashamed thy slowe seruaunte of god
that they be founde more redy to warkes
of deth / than thou arte to warkes of lyfe
and that they ioye more in vanite than
thou in trowgh: yet they be oft deceiued

The thyrde booke. Folio. lxxiiij.

that: that they haue moſte truſte in / but
my promyſe deceyueth no man ne leueth
no mā that truſteth in me without ſome
comforte / that I haue promyſed I wyl
performe / and that I haue ſayd I wyl
fulfyll to euery pſone / ſo that they abyde
faythfully in my loue and dyede vnto the
ende / for I am the rewarde of all good
men / and a ſtronger prouer of all deuoute
ſoules: wyte my wordes therfore in thy
herte diſygently & ofte thynke thou vpon
them / and they ſhalbe in tyme of temp-
tacion moche neceſſary vnto the / that
thou vnderſtandeſt nat whan thou redeſt
it: thou ſhalt vnderſtande in the tyme of
my viſifacion. I am wonte to viſyte my
ſeruauntes two maner of wayes / that is
to ſaye with temptacion and with con-
ſolacion / and two leſſons dayly I rede
vnto them / one wherby I rebuke theyr
bytes / a nother wherby I ſpyre them to
encreaſe i vertues: And he that knoweth
my wordes and diſpiſeth them / hath that
that ſhall iuge hym in the laſte daye.

**A prayer to optayne the grace
of deuotion. The fourth
Chapitre.**

Impta

Iſe

The thyrde boke.

O Lord Iesu thou arte all my ry-
ches / and all that I haue : I
haue it of the: But what am I
lorde that I dare thus speke to the I am
thy poorest seruaunte: and a worine mooste
abieete/moze poore and moze dispisable
than I can or dare say . Beholde lorde
that I am nought/that I haue nought/
of my selfe I am nought worth. Thou
arte onely god:right wysc and holy/thou
orderest all thyng/thou gyuest all thing/
and thou fulfyllest all thynges with thy
goodnes / leuyng onely the wretched syn-
ner bareyne and voyde of heuely cōforte.
Remēbre thy mercyes and fylle my herte
with thy many folde graces / for thou
wylte nat that thy workes in me be made
in vayne. How may I bere the miseries
of this lyfe : but thy grace and mercy do
cōforte me therein. Tourne nat thy face
frome/differre nat thy visityng of me/ ne
withdrawe nat thy cōfortes frō me/ lest
haply my soule be made as drye erthe:
without the water of grace / and as it
were a thing vnprofitable to the. Teache
me lorde to fulfyll thy wylle and to lyue
mekely and worthely before the/for thou
arte all my wysdome and connyng/and

The thyde boke Folio. lxxiii.
thou arte he that knoweste me as I am/
and that kneweste me before the worlde
was made/and before that I was borne
or brought in to this lyfe.

☛ Howe we ought to be conuersaunte
before god in trouth and mekenes.

The. v. Chapitre.

MI lone sayth our lord Iesu/walke
before me in trouth and mekenes/
and seke me alwaye in symplenes and
playnnes of herte. He that walketh in
trouth shalbe defended from all perylls
and daungers / and trouth shal delyuee
hym fro all deceyuours and from all euyl
saynges of wycked people. If trouth de-
lyuer the / thou arte very fre : and then
shalte lytell care for the vayne saynges
of the people. Lorde it is true all that
thou sayest / be it done to me after thy
sayng: I beseeche the that thy trouth may
teache me and kepe me / and synally lede
me to a blessed endyng / and that it may
delyuee me from all euyl affectiōs / and
from all inordynate loue / that I maye
walke with the in fredome of spieite and
in lyberte of herte.

Ampt.

I. ii.

The thyrde boke.

Then trouth saith agayne I shal teache
the what is acceptable and lykynge to me
thinke on thy synnes past with great dis-
pleasure and sorowe of herte / and neuer
thynke thy selfe worthy to be called holy
or vertuous for no good dedes that thou
hast done / but that thou thynke howe
greate a synner thou arte belapped and
bounde with manyfolde synnes and pas-
sions/and that of thy selfe thou droweste
to nought / soneallest / sone arte ouer-
come/sone troubled / and sone arte thou
broke with labour and payne/and thou
hast nothynge wherof thou mayst ryght-
wysely glorify thy selfe:but many thinges
thou hast wherfore thou oughtest to dis-
pise thy selfe/for thou arte more vnstable
and more wepke to ghostly werkes than
thou knowest or mayst thynke. Let no-
thyng therfore seme great to the / no-
thyng precious/nothing worthy any re-
putacion / ne worthy to be praysed in thy
syght : but that is euerlastynge. Let the
euerlastynge trouth be moste lykynge and
moste plesaunte in the aboue all other
thynges/and thynce owne synne & bylete
be moste myslykynge and moste displa-
saunte to the / dyede nothynge so moche

ne retrioune nothyng so moche : ne let no-
thyng be to the so moche hated / ne fe-
thou nothyng so moche as thy synnes
and wyckednes/for they shulde more dis-
please the : than shulde the losse of all
worldly thyngs. ¶ Some there be that
walke nat purely before me : for they
throughe pryde and curiosyte of the selfe
desyre to serche & to knowe hygh thinges
of my godhede forgetting them selfe and
the helth of theyr owne soules. Suche
persones fall ofte tymes in great temp-
tacions & into greuous synnes for theyr
pryde and curiosite/for the whiche I am
toured agaynst them:and leue them to
them selfe without helpe or counseyle of
me. ¶ Dede therfore the iugemente of
god and the wrathe of hym that is al-
myghty and discusse nat ne serche nat his
secretes/but serche well thynne owne ini-
quities. Howe ofte and howe greuously
thou haste offended hym / and howe ma-
ny good dedes thou haste neglygently
omytted and lefte vndone whiche thou
myghtest well haue done. Some persons
bere theyr deuotion in bokys/some in yma-
ges/some in outwarde tokenes and fygu-
res / some haue me in theyr mouth : but

The thyrde booke.

lytell in theyr herte / but some there be
that haue theyr reason clerely illumyned
with the lycht of true vnderstandynge,
wherby theyr affection is so purged and
purified fro loue of erthely thynges that
they may alway coueyte and desyre heuē
ly thyngs: in so moche that it is greuous
to them for to here of erthely lychnges/
and it is to the also a ryght great payne
to serue the necessytes of the body / and
they thynke al the tyme as lost that they
go aboute it. Suche persons fele and
knowe wel what the spirite of trouth spe
keth in theyr soules/for it teacheth them
to dispise erthly thynges / and to loue he-
uēly thyngs: to forsake the worlde that
is transitory / and to desyre both day and
nuyght to come thether where is sope eue
lastynge. To the whiche bynge vs our
lorde Iesus, Amen.

¶ Of the meruaylous effecte of the loue
of god. The. vi. Chapitre.

Blessed be thou heuēly father
The father of my lord Ihesu
Christe: for thou hast vouches-
safe to remembre me thy poorest seruaunte/

The thyrde boke. Folio. lxxvi.

and somtyme doste cōforte me with thy
gracious presence that am vnworthye
all conforte. I blesse the and glorify the
alway with thy onely begotten sone and
the holy ghoſte without endyng. Amen.
¶ A my lord god moſte faythfull loue/
whan thou cōmeſt in to my herte: all my
inwarde partyes do ioy. Thou arte my
glory: and the ioye of my herte / my hope
and my hole refuge in all my troubles.
But for aſmoche as I am yet feble i loue
and vnperfyte in vertue: therfore I haue
nede to haue more conforte: and more
helpe of the / vouchesaſe therfore ofte ty-
mes to viſyte me: and to instructe me
with thy holy teachynges / deliuer me
fro all euill paſſyons: and helpe my ſpyke
herte from all inordinate affectiones / that
I may be inwardly healed and purged
from all inordinate affectiones and vyces
and be made apte and able to loue the/
ſtronger for to ſuffre for the: and ſtable to
perſeuer in the. Loue is a great thyng
and a good / and onely maketh heuy bou-
den lyght / and bereth in lyke balaunce
thyngs pleaſaunte & diſpleaſaunte / it be-
reth a heuy bourde & ſealeth it nat / & ma-
keth bytter thyngs to be ſauoury & ſwete.

The thyrde boke.
Also the noble loue of Iesu perfytylly prync-
tyed in mannes soule maketh a man to do
great thynges and styreth hym alwaye
to desyre perfection / and to growe more
and more in grace and goodnes . Loue
wylly allway haue his mynde bpwarde to
god and wylly nat be occupied with loue
of the worlde. Loue wylly also be fre from
all worldly affections that the inwarde
syght of the soule be nat darked ne let/ne
that his affection to heuynly thynges be
nat put from his fre liberte by inordinate
wynnyng or lesynge of worldly thynges.
Nothyng therefore is more sweter than
loue/nothyng hygher / nothyng stronger/
nothyng larger/nothyng ioyfuller/
nothyng fuller / ne nothyng better in
heuen: ne in erthe/for loue descendeth fro
god and may nat rest fynally in nothyng
lower than god . Suche a louer fleeth
hygh / he renneth swettely / he is mery
in god/he is fre in soule/he gyueth all for
all / and hath all in all / for he resteth in
one hygh goodnes aboue all thynges/of
whome all goodnes floweth & procedeth
he beholdeth nat onely the gyfte / but the
gyuer aboue all gyftes/loue knoweth no
measure but is seruent without measure.

The thyrde booke. Folio, lxxvii.

It feleth no burden / it regardeth no labour / it desyreth more than it may attain / it complaineth of none impossibilitie for it thynketh all thyng that may be done for his beloued possible and lawfull vnto hym . Loue therfore doth many great thynges and bryngeth them to effecte wherin he that is no louer saynteth and fayleth. Loue waketh moche and slepeth lytell / and sleppng : slepeth nat / is saynteth and is nat wery : is restrayned of lyberte : and is in great fredome . He seeth causes of fere : and fereth nat / but as a quicke bynde or sparkle of fyre flameth alway bpwarde by seruoure of loue in to god / and throught the speciall helpe of grace is deliuered fro all perilles and daungers . He that is thus a ghostly louer knoweth well what this voyce meaneth whiche sayth thus . * Thou lord god art my hole loue and my desyre / thou arte all myne and I all thine . Spredde thou my herte in to thy loue that I may taste & fele howe swete it is to serue the and howe ioyfull it is to laude the and to be as I were all molten in to thy loue . I am bounden in loue and go far above my selfe for the greates wonder seruoure

The thyde boke.

that I fele of thy vnspekable goodnes I
shall synge to the: the songe of loue / and
I shall folowe the my beloued: by hygh-
nes of thought: where so euer thou go.
And my soule shall neuer be wery to praise
the: with the ioyfull song of ghostly loue
that I shall synge to the. I shall loue the
more than my selfe / and nat my selfe-but
for the and all other in the and for the/as
the lawe of loue commaundeth whiche is
gyuē by the. Loue is swyfte/pure/meke/
iourous and glade/stronge / pacient/faith
full/wyse/forberynge / manly and neuer
sekyng hym selfe ne his owne wyll / for
whan so euer a man seketh hym selfe / he
falleth fro loue/ also loue is circumspecte
meke/ryghtwyse/nat tender / nat lyght/
ne hedynge vayne thynges / sober/chaste/
stable/quiet/and well stabled in his out-
warde wyttes. Also loue is subiecte and
obedient to his prelate/vyle and dyspy-
sable in his owne syght: deuoute & thanke-
full to god/trustyng and alwaye hoppyn
in hym / and that whan he hath but ly-
tell deuocion or lytell sauoure in hym/for
without some sorowe or payne no man
may lyue in loue / he that is nat alwaye
redy to suffre / and to stande fully at the

Wyll of his beloued / is nat worthy to be
called a louer / for it behoueth a louer to
suffre gladly all harde and bytter thyngs
for his beloued / and nat to declyne from
his loue for no contrarious thyng that
may befall vnto hym,

¶ Of the prouise of a true louer of god.
The. vii. Chapitre.

A son saith our sauour Christe
thou arte nat yet a stronge and
a wyse louer: for why? For a ly
tel aduersite thou leuest anone that thou
hast begonne in my seruyce with great
desyre thou sekest outwarde cōsolacions.
But a stronge and a faythfull louer of
god standeth stable in all aduersytes and
gyueth lytell hede to the deceptfull per-
suacions of the enemye. And as I please
hym in prosperite: so I dysplease hym
nat in aduersyte. A wyse louer confyde-
reth nat so moch the gyfte of his louer
as he doth the loue of the gyuer / he re-
gardeth more the loue thā the gyfte/and
accompteth all gyftes lytell in compari-
son of his beloued that giueth thē to him
A noble louer resteth nat in the gyftes

The thyrde boke.

but in me aboue all gyftes / ferthermore
it is nat all losse though thou somtyme
fele lesse deuotion to me and to my saintes
than thou woldest do / and on that other
syde the swete ghostly desyre that thou
selest somtyme to thy lord Iesu / is the
feable gyfte of grace gyuen to thy con-
forte in this lyfe and a taste of the heuen-
ly glory in the lyfe to come / but it is nat
good that thou lene ouermoeche to suche
confortes for they lyghtly come and go
after the wyll of the gyuer / but to stryue
alway without cessyng agaynste all euyl
mociōs of synne and to dyspyse all the
suggestions of the enemye; is a token of
perfeyte loue and greate merite and syn-
guler grace/let no vanities ne no straunge
fantasies trouble the of what matter so
euer they be. Kepe thyne intentē and thy
purpose alwaye hole and stronge to me/
and thynke nat that it is an illusion that
thou arte sodenly rauished in to excelle
of mynde / and that thou arte sone after
toured agayne in to thy fyrste lyghtnes
of herte/for thou sufferest suche lyghtnes
rather agaynste thy wyll than with thy
wyll. And therfore if thou be dyspleased
therwith / it shalbe to the greate merite

The thynde boke. Folio. lxxi.

and no perdition. ¶ I knowe sayth our
lorde that the olde auncient enemye the
fynde wyll assaye to let thy good wyll/
and to extyncte the good desyre that thou
hast to me and to all goodnes all that
he can/ and he wyll also hynde the from
all good warkes and deuoute exercises if
he may : that is to say from the honoure
and worshippe that thou arte bounden to
goue to me and to my sayntes/and from
mynde of my passion/ & from the remem-
braunce of thyne owne synnes/ fro a dili-
gent kepyng of thy herte in good medi-
tations : and from a stedfaste purpose to
profyte in vertue / he wyll also put in to
thy mynde many ydel thoughtes to make
the pryke and to be sone wepy with prayer
and with redyng & with all other good
vertuous warkes . A meke confession dis-
pleaseth hym moche and if he can he wyl
let a man that he sh all nat be howsilled.
But beluee hym nat he care nat for hym
thoughe he assaye the neuer so moche/
make all his malice retourne to him selfe
agayne and say to hym thus. ¶ Go fro
me thou wycked spirite : and be thou as-
shamed for thou arte foule and vggely
that woldest bypunge suche thynges in to

The thyrd booke.

my mynde. So from me thou false decey-
uer of makynde: thou shalt haue no parte
in me/for my sauoure Iesu standeth by
me as a myghty warrioure and a strong
champion/and thou shalt fle away to thy
confusion. I had leuer suffre the moste
cruell deth than to consente to thy mali-
cious styrrynge / be styl therefore thou
cursed synde and cesse thy malice: for I
shall neuer assente to the; though thou
bere me neuer so moche. Our lord is my
lyght and my helth whome shall I drede
and he is the defender of my lyfe / what
shall I feare. Truly though an hoste of
men aryse agaynste me: my herte shall
not drede them:for why? God is my hel-
per & my redemer. Than sayth our lord
agayne to suche a soule. **G** Stepe al-
wayne as a true knyght agaynste all the
styrrynge of the enemy: & if thou be some-
tyme through thy feaple overcome yse
foune agayne and take more strength tha
thou haddest fyrste & truste verily to haue
more grace and more coforte of god tha
thou haddest before / but beware allwaye
of vayne glory and pryde/for thereby ma-
ny persons haue fallē in to great errors
and in to great blyndenes of soule so saye

The thyrde boke. Folio. lxx.

that it hath ben ryght nygh incurable.
Be it therfore to the a great ex ample and
a mater of perpetuall mekenes / the fall
and ruyne of suche proude folkes / that so
lythely haue presumed of the selfe . And
haue in the ende finally perished by theire
presumption.

Howe grace is to be kepte close
through the vertue of mekenes.
The. vii. Chapitre.

Mane : it is moche more expe-
dient : and moche more the surer
way for the / that thou hyde the grace of
deuocion / and nat to speke moche of it/
ne moche to regarde it / but rather to dis-
pise thy selfe the more for it : and to thinke
thy selfe vnworthy any suche gracious
gyfte of god / than to speke of it. And it is
nat good to cleue moche to suche affec-
tions that may be sone tourned to the co-
trary. whā thou hast the grace of deuociō
cōsider howe wretched & howe nedy thou
wert wōt to be whā thou hadest no suche
grace. The profyte & encrease of lyfe spi-
ritual is nat only whā thou hast deuociō
but rather whā thou canste mekely and

The thyrde boke.

patiently bere the withdrowynge : and
the absentynge therof/and yet nat to leue
thy prayers ne thy other good dedes that
thou arte accustomed to do : vndone/ but
to thy power and as farre as in the is/
thou doste thy beste therein and forgettest
nat thy duety therfore nor thou arte nat
negligente for any dulnes or vniquietnes
of mynde that thou felest . Nevertheless
there be many persones that whan any
aduersyte falleth to them they be anone
vnpaciēt and be made thereby very slowe
and dull to do any good dede and they
hyndre them selfe greatly . For it is nat
in the power of man the way that he shal
take / but it is onely in the grace of god
to dispose that after his will and to sende
cōforte whā he wyl and as moche as he
wyl & to whome he wyl as it shal please
him and none otherwyle. Some vnware
persones throughe an vndescrete desyre
that they haue had to haue the grace of
detraction haue destroyed them selfe : for
they wolde do more than theyr power
was to do. And wolde nat knowe the me-
sure of their gyfte ne the lytelnes of their
owne strength : but rather wolde folowe
the pryde of theyr herte thā the iugement

of reason. And bycause they presumed to do greater thynges than was pleasaunt to god/therefore they lost anon the grace that they had before/and were lefte neddy and without comforte/whiche thoughte to haue buylded theyr nestes in heuen / & so they were taughte nat to presume of them selfe / but mekely to truste in god & in his goodnes. Also suche persones as be begynners : & yet lacke experyence in ghostly trauaile: may lightly erre and be deceyued/but they wyl be ruled by counsayse of other. And if they wyl nedely folowe theyr owne counsayle and wyl in no wyse be remoued fro theyr owne wyl / it wyl be very peryllous to them i the ende. And it is nat lyghtly sente that they that be wyse and conynge in theyr owne sight wyl be mekely ruled or ordered by other. It is better to haue lytell conynng with mekenes than great conynng with bayne lykyng therein/and it is better to haue lytell conynng with grace/than moche conynge wherof thou shuldeste be proude/also he wyl nat discretely that in tyme of deuotion setteth him selfe all to spirituall myght and as it were to a heuenly gladnes/and forgetteth his former desolacion

The thyrde boke.

and the meke dyede of god. **N**e he dothe
nat well nor vertuously that in tyme of
trouble or of any maner aduersite or gra-
uite bereth him selfe ouermuche desperat-
ly and feleth nat ne thynketh nat so trust-
fully of me as he oughte to do / he that in
tyme of peace & of ghostly conforte wyl-
thynke hym selfe ouermuche spker / com-
ly in tyme of batayle and of temptacyon
shall be founde ouermuche deicete and fe-
refull. But if thou couldest alway abyde
meke and lptell in thyne owne syght and
couldest orde well the mocions of thyne
owne soule: thou shuldest nat so sone fall
into presumption or dyspayre / ne so lyght-
ly offende almyghtye god / wherefore thys
is good and holsome counsaile / that whan
thou haste the speryte of fernoure thou
thynke howe thou shalt do whan that fer-
uour is passed / and than whā it happen-
eth so with the: that thou thynke that
it may sone come agayne / whiche to my
honoure & to thy prouynge I haue with-
drawen for a tyme. And it is more profita-
ble to the that thou shuldest be so proued
than that thou shuldest alway haue pro-
sperous thynges after thy wyl / for why
merytes are nat to be thought greate in

any persone by cause he hath many wys-
 ons or many ghostly cōfortes/or for that
 he hath clere vnderstandyng of scripture
 or that he is set in hyghe degree. But if he
 be stably grounded in mekenes and be ful-
 fylled with charyte/& seke hooly the wo-
 rshyppe of god and in nothyng regardeth
 hym selfe/but fully i his herte can dyspyse
 hym selfe/and also coueyteth to be dyspy-
 sed of other/than may he haue good trust
 that he hath somewhat profyted in grace
 and that he shall in the ende haue great
 rewarde of god for his good traunple.
 Amen.

¶ Holwe we shall thinke throughe me-
 kenes our selfe byle & abiecte in the
 syght of god. The. ix. chappter.

Shall I lorde Iesu dare speke to
 the: that am but duste and as-
 shes: verely if I thinke my selfe
 any better than ashes & duste/ thou stand-
 dest agaynst me. And also myne owne
 synnes bere wytnes agaynst me that I
 maye nat with saye it/ but if I dyspyse
 my selfe and set my selfe at nought/and
 thynke my selfe but ashes and duste as

The thyrde booke.

I am/ than thy grace shall be nygh vnto me: and the lpyght of true vnderstandyng shall entre in to my herte/ so that all presumption and pryde in me shall be drowned in the vale of mekenes throughe partyte knowynge of my wretchednes.

Throughe mekenes thou shalt shewe vnto me what I am/ what I haue ben and fro whens I came/ for I am nought and knowe it nat/ if I be left to my selfe than am I nought and all is feblenes and infection. But if thou vouchesafe a lytell to beholde me/ anone I am made stronge/ & and fylled with a newe ioy and meruayle it is that I wretche am so sone lyfte vp fro my vnstableness in to the beholdyng of heuently thynges/ and that I am so lowlyngly enhailed of the: that of my selfe fall downe alwaye to earthely lykynges. But thy loue lord: causeth al this which preuenth me: and helpeth me in all my necessytes/ and kepeth me warly from all perylls and dangers that I am daily lyke to fall into. I haue losse the and also my selfe by inordynate loue that I haue had to my selfe/ and in keeping of the agayne. I haue sounde bothe the and me & therfore will I more depely from hence

The thyrde boke. Fo..lxxviii.

forth set my selfe at nought and more de-
lygently seke the thā I haue done i tyme
passe / for thou lord Iesu thou doste to
me aboue all my merytes / and aboue all
that I can aske or desyre. But blessed be
thou in all thy warkes for thoughe I be
vnworthy any good thing / yet thy good-
nes neuer cesseth to do well to me and al-
so to many other whych be vnkynde to
the & that are tourned ryghte far fro the.
Toune vs lord therfore to the agayne
that we maye hensforwarde belouynge /
thankful / meke / & deuoute to the / for thou
arte our helth / thou arte our vertue / and
all our strength in body and in soule: and
none but thou / so the therfore be ioye and
glory euerlastyngly in the blisse of heuen
Amen.

Howe all thynges are to be referred
to god as ende of euery worke.

The .x. Chapter.

¶ Some sayeth our sauour Christ /
I muste be the ende of all thy war-
kes if thou desyre to be happy and blessed
And if thou referre all goodnes to me fro
whome all goodnes cometh. Thā shall

The thyrde booke.

be purged and made cleane in the / thyne
inwarde affectyons whiche els wolde be
euill enclined to thy selfe & to other crea-
tures / if thou seeke thy selfe in any thyng
as ende of thy worke / anone thou sayest
in thy doyng and warrest dye and barcyn
from all moyster of grace / wherfore thou
muste relurre al thyngs to me for I gyue
all. Beholde therfore all thynges as they
be flowynge and spryngynge out of my
souerayne goodnes: and reduce all thyngs
to me as to theyr original begynnge / for
of me both smale and great / poore & riche
as of a quicke springynge well drawe wa-
ter of lyfe / he that serueth me frely and
with good wyll / shall receyue grace for
grace. But he that will glorie hym selfe
in hym selfe: or wyll fully ioy in any thyng
besyde me / shall nat be stablesed in par-
tyte ioy ne be delated in soule / but he shall
be letted & anguished many wayes from
the trewe fredome of spirite / thou shalt
therefore ascrybe no goodnes to thy selfe
ne thou shalt nat thynke that any per-
sone hath any goodnes of hym selfe / but
that thou yelde alwaye the goodnes to
me / without whome man hath nothyng.
I haue gyuen all: and all wyll I haue a-

The thyrde boke.

Jo. lxxiii.

gayne and with great strytenes/wyll I
loke to haue thankynge therfore. Thys
is the trouthe wherby is dyuen away al
maner of vayne glory and pryde of herte:
if heuenly grace and perfite charyte enter
into thy herte/ than there shall no enue
ne vnquyetnes of mynde ne any pryuate
loue haue true euile in the. For the cha
ryte of god shall ouercome all thynges: &
shall dylate and enflame al the powers of
thy soule. wherfore if thou vnderstandest
a ryght thou shalt neuer ioy but in me;
and in me onely thou shalt haue truste /
for no man is good but god alone/which
is aboue all thynges to be honoured and
in all thynges to be blessed. Amen.

¶ That it is swete & delectable to serue
god/and to forsake the worlde.

The. xi. Chappter.

Howe shall I yet speke agayne
to the my lord Iesu and nat
cease. And I shall saye in the
eares of my lord: my god and kyng/that
is in heuen. & How great is the ba
bundance of the swetnes whiche thou hast

hyde and kepte for them that dyede the.
 But what is it than to the that loue the/
 and that with all they herte to serue the/
 verely it is the unspekeable swetnes of co-
 templacion that thou giuest to them that
 loue the. In this lorde thou haste moste
 shewed the swetnes of thy charyte to me/
 that whan I was nat thou madest me/
 whan I erred far from the/thou brough-
 test me agayne to serue the/ and thou co-
 maundedst me also that I shall loue the. &
 O fountayne of loue euerlastynge what
 shall I sape of the / howe may I forgette
 the/that haste bouchesafe thus louingly
 to remembre me. whan I was like to haue
 perished thou shewedest thy mercy to me
 aboue al that I coulde haue thought and
 despyed/and haste sente me of thy graces
 of thy loue aboue my merytes. But what
 shall I gyue to the agayne for all thys
 goodnes. It is nat gauen to all men to
 forsake the worlde and to take a solitary
 lyfe & onely to serue the. And yet it is no
 great thyng to serue the /whome euery
 creature is bounden to serue. It ought nat
 therfore to seme any great thyng to me
 to serue the/but rather it shuld seme mer-
 uayle and wonder to me/that thou wylte

Vouchesafe to receyue so poore/ and so vn
worthy a creature as I am into thy ser
uice/ and that thou wylt ioyne me to thy
welbeloued seruantes. To lorde al thinge
that I haue: and al that I do the seruyce
with be thyne. And yet thy goodnes is
suche that thou rather seruest me than I
the. For lo: heuen and erthe/ planettes/ &
sterres with theyr cōtentes whyche thou
hast created to serue man/ be redy at thy
byddynge & do dayly that thou hast com
maunded. And thou hast also ordayned
Angels to the mynistry of man. But as
boue all this thou hast vouchesafe to
serue man thy selfe/ and hast promysed to
gyue thy selfe vnto him/ what shal I thā
gyue to the agayne for this thousand folde
goodnes/ wolde to god that I myght ser
ue the all the dayes of my lyfe or at the
lesse/ that I myght one day be able to do
the fapthfull seruyce for thou arte worthy
al honour seruyce and praylynge for euer
Thou arte my lorde and my god/ and I
thy poorest seruaunt moste bounden before
al other to loue the and prayse the/ and I
necuer ought to war wery of the prayling
of the. And that is it that I aske: that I
desyre/ that is to say/ that I may allwaye

The thyrd boke.

laude the and prayse the/vouchesafe ther
foze most mercyfull lorde to supplie that
wanteth in me/foz it is great honoure to
serue the and al erthly thinges to dispyse
foz the loue of the. They shall haue great
grace that frely submytteth them selfe to
thy holy seruiue. And they shall fynde also
the moste swete consolacyon of the holy
ghoste/& shall haue great fredome of spi-
rite/that here forsake al worldly busynes
and chose an harde and a strayte lyfe in
this worlde for thy name. ¶ O fre & ioy-
ful seruiue of god/by the whiche a man is
made fre and holy/ and also blessed in the
syght of god. ¶ O holy state of religyon
whiche maketh a man lyke to Angels
pleasaunt to god/dredefull to wycked spi-
rites/& to all faythfull people right hygh
ly cōmendable. O seruice moche to be en-
halsed and alway to be desyred/by whom
the hyghe goodnes is wonne & the euer-
lastyng ioy and gladnes is gotten with-
out ende.

¶ That the desyres of the herte ought
to be well examyned and well
to be moderated. The. xii.

Chaptyer.

M I sone sayth our lord: he it behoueth
the to lerne many thynges that
thou haste nat yet well lerned. What be
they lord: that thou order thy desyres
and thy affectyons hooly after my plea-
sure and that thou be nat a louer of thy
selfe but a desyrous folowr of my wyll
in all thynges / I knowe well that desy-
res ofte moue the to this thyng or to
that. But consyder well whether thou be
moued principally for my honoure or for
thyne owne. If I be i the cause thou shalt
be wel cōtēted what so euer I do with the
but if any thyng remayne in thy hert of
thyne owne wyll / that is it that letteth
the and hyndereth the. Beware therfore
that thou leue nat moche to thyne owne
desyre without my counsaile / lest hap-
pyly it forthyne the and displease the i the
ende that fynde pleased the. Euery affec-
tion and desyre of mannes herte that se-
meth good and holy / is nat forthwith to
be folowed nor euery contrarious affec-
tion or desyre is nat hastily to be refused it
is somtyme ryght expedient that a man
refrayne his affectyons & desyres though
they be good / lest happely by his impo-
sunitie he fall into ynquietnes of mynde /

The thyrde boke.

or be letted by other/ & so sayle i his doyng
and somtyme it behoueth vs to vse as it
were a violence to our selfe and strongly
to resyst and breke downe our sensual ap-
petyt and nat to regarde what the fleshe
wyl/ or wyl nat/ but alway to take hede
that it be made subiecte to the will of the
spirite/ and that it be so longe chastysed &
cōpelled to serue tyll it be redy to al thing
that the soule cōmaūdeth/ and that it can
lerne to be contente with a lytell and can
delyght in spmple thynges/ & nat to mur-
mur ne to grudge for no cōtrarious thin-
ges that may befall vnto it.

Howe we shulde kepe pacyence and
contynually stryue agaynste all
concupiscence. The. xiii.

Chappter.

O My lord god as I here say pa-
cyence is moche necessary vnto
me/ for many contrarious thyn-
ges fall dayly in this lyfe. I fe well that
how so euer I order my self to haue peace
yet my lyfe can nat be without some ba-
tayle and sorowe. My sone it is true
as thou sayest/ wherfore I wyl nat that

The thyrde booke. Fo. lxxviii.

thou seeke to haue suche peace as wanteth
temptacions or as feleth nat some contra
diction. But that thou trowe and beleue
that thou haste founde peace whan thou
haste many troubles & arte proued with
many cōtrarious thinges in this worlde
and if thou saye thou mayste nat suffre
suche thynges/ howe shalt thou than sus
fre the fyre of purgatory. Of two cuples
the lesse cupll is to be taken. Suffre ther
fore paciently the lytell paynes of thys
worlde/ that thou mayste here after escape
the greater in the worlde to come. Tro
west thou that worldly men suffre litel or
nothyng & yes truely / thou shalt fynde
none without some trouble though thou
seeke the mosse delicate personcs that be.
But percase thou sayest to me agayne /
they haue many delectacions and folowe
theyr owne pleasures so moche that they
pōdyre but lytell all their aduersite. I wyl
well it be as thou sayest that they haue al
that they can desyre/ but howe longe tro
west thou that it shall endure. Sothely it
shall sodaynly vanyshe awaye as smoke
in the heyre/ so that there shall nat be left
any remembraunce of theyr ioyes passed
And yet whan they lyued they were nat

The thyrd booke.
without great bytternes & greife / for ofte
tymes of the same thing wherein they had
theyr greatest pleasure receyued they af-
ter great trouble and payne: and ryghte
wylfully came that vnto them / that for as-
moche as they sought delectacyons and
pleasures inordinately / that they shulde
nat fulfill theyr desyre therein but with
great bytternes and sorowe. **O** howe
shorte / howe false / and howe inordynate
be all the pleasures of this worlde / sothly
for drunkenhype and blyndnes of herte /
the worldly people perceyue it nat: ne
wyl nat perceyue it: but as dombre bea-
stes. For a lytell pleasure of thys corrup-
tyble lyfe they rene hedlyng into euerla-
styng deth. **T**herefore my sone go nat
thou after thy concupysense / but tourne
the lyghtly from thyn owne wyl: delyte
the in god / and sire thy loue strongly in
hym and he shall gyue the / the askyng of
thy herte. And if thou wylt haue consola-
cyon abundantly and wylte receyue the
sothfast comfort that cometh of god / dis-
pose thy selfe fully to dyspse this worlde /
and put from the hooly all inordynate de-
lectacions: & thou shalt haue plentuously
the comforte of god. And the more that

The thyȝde boke. Fo. lxxviii.

thou withdrauest the from the consolacyon of all creatures / the more swete and blessed cōsolacions shalte thou receyue of thy creatoure. But sothly thou canste nat at the fyrste come to suche consolacyons but with heynnes and labour goyng before / thy olde custome wyl somwhat withstande the / but with a better custome it may be overcome. The fleshe wyl murmure agaynst the / but with feruoure of spirite it shalbe refrained. The olde aſcient enemy the sēde wyl let the if he can but with deuout prayer he shalbe dysuened awaye / and with good hodely and ghoſte laboures his way shalbe stopped so that he shall nat dare nyghe vnto the.

¶ Of the obedience of a meke subiecte after the example of our lorde Iesu Chyſte. The. xiii. Chappter.

Man sayth our sauour Chyſte he that labourerh to withdraue hym from obedyence withdraueth hym fro grace. And he that seketh to haue pryuate thynges leſeth the thynges that be in

The thyrde booke.
comon/ if a man can nat gladly submytte
hym to his superiour / it is a token that
his fleshe is nat yet fully obedient to the
spirite/ but that it ofte rebelleth and mur-
mureth. Therfore if thou desyre to over-
come thy selfe & to make thy fleshe obey
mchely to the wil of the spirite/ lerne first
to obey gladly to thy superiour. The out-
warde enemy is the souer overcome if the
inner man that is the soule be nat sedled
nor wastede. There is no worse ne none
more greuous enemye to thy soule : than
thy selfe if thy fleshe be nat well agreying
to the will of the spirite. It becometh the
therfore to haue a true dyspyng and cō-
tempte of thy selfe/ if thou wylt preuaile
agaynst thy fleshe and blode / but for as-
moche as thou yet louest thy selfe inordi-
natly/ therfore thou scarest to resigne thy
wyl hooly to another mannes wyl. But
what great thyng is it to the that arte
but duste and nought/ if thou subdue thy
selfe to man for my sake/ whā I that am
all myghty and moste hygh god/ maker
of all thynges subdued my selfe mchelye
to man for thy sake / I made my selfe
mooste meke and moost lowe of all men
that thou shuldest lerne to overcome thy

The thynde boke. Folio. lxxix.
pynde through my mekenes / lerne there-
fore thou althes to be tractable / lerne
thou erthe and duste to be meke and to
bowe thy selfe vnder euery mannes fore
for my sake / lerne to breke thyne owne
wyl and to be subiecte to all men as in
thy herte. Kysse in great wrath agaynste
thy selfe / and suffre nat pynde to reygne
in the / but shewe thy selfe so lytel and so
obedient and so noughty in thyne owne
syght: that as the thynkes all men may
ryghtwysely go ouer the and trede vpon
the: as vpon erth or clay. O bayne man
what haste thou to complayne. O thou
fowle synner / what mayste thou ryght-
wysely say agaynste the that reprocue the
syth thou haste so ofte offended god / and
haste also so ofte deserued the paynes of
hell. But neuertheles my eye of mercy
hath spared the for thy soule is precious
in my syght / that thou shuldest thereby
knowe the great loue that I haue to the
and be therfore the more thankfull to me
agayne & gve thy selfe to parfyte & true
subiection & mekenes / and to be redy in
herte paciely to suffre for my sake thyne
owne cōtemptes & dispysing / whā soeuer
they shall happen to fall vnto the. Amen.

Ampta.

R. a.

The thynde boke,
Of the secrete and hydde iugementys
of god to be consydered: that we be
nat prouede of our good
dedes. The.xv.
Chapitre.

..

(:::)

..

Horde thou sowneſte thy iu-
gementes terrible vpon me:
and filleſt my body and bones
with great fere and dyede / my ſoule alſo
trembleth very ſore for I am greatly as-
tonied for that I ſe that heuēnes be nat
clene in thy ſyght / for ſyth thou foundeſt
default in angels and ſpareddeſt the nat:
what ſhal become of me that am but vile
and ſynkyng carcyne. Sterres fell from
heuen: and I duſte & aſhes what ſhulde
I preſume. Alſo ſome people that ſemed
to haue great werkes of vertue/haue fal-
len full lowe. And ſuche as were fedde
with meate of angels/ I haue ſene after
deſytc in ſwynes meate / that is to ſay in
fleſhely pleasures / wherfoze it maye be
well ſaid and verified that there is no ho-
lynēſe ne goodnes in vs: if thou with-
draue thy hande of mercy from vs / ne
that no wyſdome maye auayle vs. If

The thyrde boke. Folio. lxxx.

thou lord govern it nat:ne any strength
helpe / if thou cesse to preserve vs / ne no
sure chastite can be / if thou lord defende
it nat:ne any sure keepynge may profyte
vs / if thou lord be nat wakery vpon vs /
for if we be forsaken of the anone we be
drowned and perishe / but if thou al-
tell visyte vs with thy grace : we anone
lyue and be lyfte vp agayne. we be vnsta-
ble : but by the we be confirmed / we be
colde and dull but by the we be styred to
feruoure of spirite . O howe mekely and
howe abiectely ought I therefore to fele
of my selfe / and howe moche ought I in
my herte to dispise my selfe : though he I
be holde neuer so good and holy in sight
of the worlde / and howe profoundly
ought I to submytte me to thy depe and
profounde iugementes / syth I fynde in
my selfe nothyng els but nought and
nought . O substaunce that may nat be
pondered. O see that may nat besayled /
in the and by the I fynde that my sub-
staunce is nothyng and ouer all nought.
where is now the shadowe of this world
ly glory / where is the truste that I had
in it. Truly it is banished away throughe
the depenes of thy secrete & hydde iuge-

Ampta .

L.ii.

The thyrde boke.

mentes vpon me. what is fleshe in thy
syght/howe may clay gloryfye hym selfe
agaynste his maker/howe may he be de-
ceyued with bayne prayses / whose herte
in trouth is subiecte to god: all the world
maye nat lyfte hym vp in to the pryde/
whome trouth that god is:hath perfyte-
ly made subiecte vnto hym/ ne he may
nat be deceyued with any flaterynge: that
putteth all his hole truste in god. For he
seeth well that they that speke be bayne
and nought/ and that they shall shortly
fayle with the sounde of wordes/ but the
trouth of god alwaye abydeth.

¶ Howe a man shall orde hym selfe in
his desyres. The.xvi. Chapitre.

O Sonne (saythe our Sauour
Christe) Thus shalt thou saye
in euery thyng that thou de-
syrest. Forde if it be thy wyll:be it done
as I aske / and if it be to thy praysynge:
be it fulfilled in thy name. And if thou
se it good and profitable to me /gyue me
grace to vse it to thy honoure. But if
thou knowe it hurtefull to me: and nas
profytable to the helth of my soule / then

The thyꝛde boke. **F**alio.lxxxl.
take from me suche desyre. Every desyre
cometh nat of the holy gooste though it
seme ryghtwysse and good / for it is som-
tyme full harde to iuge whether a good
spyrite or an euell: moueth the to this
thyng or to that/or whether thou be mo-
ued of thyne owne spirite: Many be de-
ceyued in the ende / whiche fyrste seemed
to haue ben moueth of the holy gooste.
Therefore with drede of god: and with
mekenes of herte it is to desyre and aske
what so euer cometh to our mynde: to be
desyred and asked/and with a hole forsa-
kyng of our selfe: to comyte all thynges
to god and say thus. **L**orde thou knowest
what thyng is to me moste profy-
table: do this or that after thy wyll/gyue
me what thou wylte / asmoche as thou
wylte/ and whan thou wylt / do with me
as thou knowest best to be done: and as
it shall please the / and as shall be moste to
thy honour / put me where thou wylte/
and frely do with me in all thynges after
thy wyll: thy creature I am and in thy
handes lede me & tourne me where thou
wylte. **L**o. I am thy seruaunte redy to al
thynges that thou comaundest: for I de-
syre nat to lyue to my selfe: but to the

The thyrde boke.
wolde to god it myght be worthely and
profytably and to thy honour. Amen,

¶ A prayer that the wyll of god be
alwaye fultylled. The. xvi.
Chapitre. *

Oste benigne lordē Iesu grafit
me thy grace / that it maye be
alwaye with me & warke with
me and perseuer with me vnto the ende
And that I may euer desire and wyl that
is moſte pleaſaunte and moſte acceptable
to the. Thy wyl be my wyl: and my
wyl alway to ſolowe thy wyl and beſte
accoorde therewith. Be there alway in me
one wyl and one deſp. e with the: and
that I haue no powee to wyl: or to nat
wyl: but as thou wylte: or wyl nat. And
grafite me that I may dye to all thyngs
that be in the worlde and for the: to loue
to be diſpiſed and to be as a man vnkno-
wen in this worlde. Graunte me alſo
aboue all thynges that can be deſpyed
that I may reſte me in the: and fully in
the to paciſye my herte / for thou lordē
arte the very true peace of herte and the
perſyte reſte of body and of ſoule. And

The thyrde booke. Folio. lxxxii.
Without the all thynges be greuous and
bnguiet/ wherfore in that peace that is
in the one hygh one blessed and one end-
les goodnes shall I alwaye reste me / so
mot it be. Amen . . .

That the very true solace and cons-
forte is in god. The. xviii.
Chapitre. . .

What so euer I may desyre or thinke
to my cōforte/ I abyde it nat here:
but I truste to haue it herafter/ for
if I alone myght haue all the solace and
cōforte of this world and myght vse the
delytes thcrof after myne owne desyre
without synne. It is certayne that they
myght nat longe endure / wherfore my
soule may nat fully be cōforted ne persy-
tely be refreshed but in god onely that is
the cōforter of the poore in spirit and the
embracer of the meke and lowe in herte.
Abyde my soule : abyde the promyse of
god/ and thou shalt haue aboundaunce of
all goodnes in heuen. If thou iordinally
couepte these goodys present thou shalt lese
the goodnes eternal/ haue therfore goodys
present in vse and eternal in desyre. Thou

The thyrde boke.

mayste in no maner be saciate with tem-
porall goodes/for thou arte nat create to
vse them and to reste the in them / for if
thou alone myghtest haue all the goodes
that euer were create & made thou migh-
test nat therfore be happy and blessed /
but thy blessed fulnes and thy full felicity
standeth onely in god that hath made all
thynges of nought/and that is nat suche
felicity as is comended of the folyshe lo-
uers of the worlde : but suche as good
christen men and women hope to haue in
the blesse of heuen / and as some ghostly
persons clene and pure in herte somtyme
do taste here in this presente lyfe / whose
conuersacion is in heuen. All worldly so-
lace and all mānes conforte is vayne and
shorte : but that cōforte is blessed & sothe-
faste that is perceyued by trouth inward-
ly in the herte. A deuoute folower of god
bereth alwaye aboute with hym his cō-
forter that is Jesu/ and sayth thus vnto
hym. * My lord Jesu I beseeche the that
thou be with me in euery place and euery
tyme and that it be to me a special solace
gladly for thy loue to wante all mānes
solace. And if thy solace want also / that
thy wyll and thy ryghtwyse prouynge

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The thyrde boke. Folio.lxxxiii.
and assaynge of me/ may be to me a syn-
guler conforste and a hyghe solace/ thou
shalte nat alwaye be angry with me: ne
thou shalt nat alwaye threte me: so moost
it be. Amen. .v. (.v.) .v.

That all our study and busynes of
mynde ought to be put in god.
The.xix. Chapitre.

MI lone(hathe our lord to his ser-
uaunte) suffre me to do with the
what I wyll/for I knowe what is beste
and mooste expedient to the/ thou workest
in many thynges after thy kyndely rea-
son and after as thy affectyon and thy
worldly polycy styreth the/ and so thou
maystelyghtly erre and be deceyued. ¶
O lord it is true all that thou sayest/thy
prouidence is moche more better for me/
than all that I can do or say for my selfe.
wherfore it may well be said and verified
that he standeth very casually that set-
teth nat all his trust in the/ therfore lord
whyle my wyt abydeth stedfaste and sta-
ble:do with me in all thynges as it plea-
seth the/ for it may nat be but well all
that thou doest/ if thou wylte that I be

The theyrde boke .

in lyght be thou blessed / and if thou wylt
I be in darkenes : be thou also blessed.
If thou vouchesafe to cōfōrt me : be thou
vryghly blessed. And if thou wylte I lyue
in trouble & without all cōfōrte : be thou
in lyke moche blessed . My sonc so it be-
houeth to be with the / if thou wilt walke
with me / as redy must thou be to suffre
as to ioye / and as gladly be neddy & poore
as welthy and ryche. Lorde I wyl gladly
suffre for the what so euer thou wylte
shall fall vpon me / indifferently wyl I
take of thy hande good and bad / bytter
and swete / gladnes and sorowe / and for
all thynges that shall befall to me / herte-
ly wyl I thanke the. Kepe me lorde fro
synne and I shall neyther drede deth ne
hell / put nat my name out of the boke of
lyfe / and it shall nat greue me what trou-
ble so euer befall vpon me.

☞ That all temporall miseries are
gladly to be borne through exāple
of Chryste. The .xx. Chapitre.

My sonc (sayth our lord) I desce-
ded from heuen / and for thy
helth haue taken thy miseries

The thyrde booke. Folio.lxxxiij.
nat compelled therto of necessity/ but of
my charite: that thou shuldest lerne to
haue patience with me and nat to dys-
dayne to bere the miseries and the wret-
chednes of this lyfe as I haue done for
the/ for from the fyrste houre of my byrth
vnto my deth vpon the crosse/ I was ne-
uer without some sorowe or paine/ I had
great lacke of tēporall thynges/ I harde
great cōplayntes made on me/ I suffred
benygnely many shames and rebukes/
for my benefaytes: I receyued unkynd-
nes/ for my myracles: blasphemies/ and
for my true doctryne many reprefes. ¶
O lord for asmoche as thou werte soude
paciēte in thy lyfe/ fulfyllinge in that
moſte ſpecially the wyl of thy father/ it
is syttinge that I moſte wretched syn-
ner bere me paciētly after thy wyl in
all thynges/ and as longe as thou wylte
that I for myne owne helthe bere the
bourden of this corruptible lyfe. For
thoughe this lyfe be tedious: and as an
heuy bourden to the soule/ yet neuerthe-
lesse: it is nowe thoroughe thy grace
made very merytorious/ and by ex-
ample of the and of thy holy sayntes it
is nowe made to weyke persones more

The thyrde boke.

sufferable and more clerer and also moche
more cōfortable than it was in the olde
lawe: whan the gates of heuen were shut
and the way thetherwarde was darke &
so fewe dyd couet to seke it. And yet they
that were thā ryght wise and were orday
ned to be saued/before thy blessed passion
and deth: myght neuer haue come the
ther. ¶ What thanks am I bounde thē
fore to yelde to the: that so lounngly hast
voucheslaufe to shewe to me and to all
faithfull people that wyl folowe the/ the
very true & strapte way to thy kyngdom.
Thy holy lyfe is our way and by thy pa
cience we walke to the that arte our hede
and gouernour. And but thou lord had
dest gone before and shewed vs the way:
who wolde haue endeuoured him to haue
folowed. ¶ Howe many shulde haue ta
ried behynde if they had nat sene thy blef
sed examplis goynge before: we be yet
slowe and dull nowe we haue sene and
harde thy sygnes and doctrynes: what
shulde we thā haue ben if we had sene no
suche lyght goynge before vs: truely we
shulde haue fired our mynde and our loue
hooly in worldly thyngs / frō the whiche
kepe vs lord of thy great goodnes. Amē.

The thyrd boke. Folio.lxxxv.

¶ Of paciente suffering of iniuries and wrongs/and who is truely paciente.

The.xxi.Chapitre.

MI some what is it that thou spekest why doest thou thus cōplaine/ cesse cesse: cōplaine nomore/ consyder my passion: and the passyons of my sayntes and thou shalt well se that it is ryght lytell that thou doest suffre for me / thou haste nat yet suffered to the shedynge of thy blode/and truely thou haste lytell suffered in cōparison of the that haue suffered so many thyngs for me in tyme past/ and that haue ben so strongly tempted/ so greuously troubled / & so many wayes proued . It be houeth the therfore to remembre the great greuous thynges that other haue suffred for me/that thou maist the more lyghtly bere thy lytell grefes. And if they seme nat lytell to the: loke thy impacience cause nat that but neuer theles whether they be lytell oz greate/ study allway to bere them paciētly without grudgyng or cōplaynyng if thou may/and the better that thou canste dispose the to suffre them the more wyselye thou doest and the more mercye shalt

The thyrde boke.

thou haue and thy bourden by reason of
thy good custome and of thy good wyll
shalbe the lyghter/thou shalte neuer saye
I can nat suffre this thyng of suche a
persone/noz it is nat for me to suffre it/he
hath done me greate wronge and lepyth
vnto my charge that I neuer thought/
but of a nother man I wyll suffre as I
shal thynke/suche maner saynges ben of
good/for they consyder nat the vertue of
paciēce noz of whome it shalbe crowued/
but they rather cōsyder the persones and
the offences done vnto them. Therefore
he is nat truely patiente that wyll nat
suffre but asmoche as he wyl of whome
he wyll / for a true patient man forseth
nat of whome he suffereth : whether of
his p̄clate oz of his felowe that is egall
vnto hym:oz of any other that is vnder
hym/noz whether he be a good man and
a holy / oz an euyll man and an vnwoz-
thy / but whan so euer any aduersyte oz
wronge falet vnto hym what so it be
and of whome so euer it be and howe oft
so euer it be/he taketh all tankefully as
of the hande of god / accompteth it as a
ryche gyfte and a great benefaite of god/
for he knoweth well that there is nothig

The thy:de boke. Folio. lxxvi.
that a man may suffre for god that may
passe without great merite. Be thou ther
fore redy to batayle if thou wylte haue
victory: without batayle thou mayst nat
come to the crowne of pacience / and if
thou wylte nat suffre: thou refuselt to be
crowned / wherfore if thou wylte nedely
be crowned resyste strongly and suffre pa
ciently / for without labour no man may
come to reste / nor without batayle no mā
may come to victory. ⁊ O lord Iesu:
make it possyble to me by grace: that is
impossyble to me by nature. Thou kno
west well that I may lytell suffre and
that I am anone caste downe with a ly
tell aduersyte / wherfore I beseeche the
that trouble and aduersyte may herafter
for thy name be beloued and desired of me
for truly to suffre and to be vexed for the
is very good and profyt able to the helth
of my soule. .: :/ (:/)

¶ Of the knowleginge of our owne in
firmities: and of the miseries of this
lyfe. The. xxii. Chapitre.

I Shall knowlege agaynst me al my
vnryghtwysenes / and I shall con-

The thyrde boke.

lesse to the lord all the vnstabilenes of
myne herte. Ofte tymes it is but a lytell
thyng that casteth me doune and ma-
keth me dull and slowe to al good workes/
and somtyme I purpose to stande strong-
ly but whan a lytell temptacion cometh
it is to me greete anguyshes and greif/
and somtyme of a ryght lytell thyng/ a
greuous temptacion ryseth: and whan
I thynke my selfe to be somewhat syker/
and that as it semeth I haue the hygher
hande: sodenly I fele my selfe nerehade
ouercome by a lyght tēptacion. Beholde
therfore good lord: beholde my weaknes
and my frailnes best knowen to the be-
fore all other. Haue mercy on me lord
and delyuer me fro the fylthy dregges of
synne that my fete be neuer fyred in the.
But this is it that ofte grudgeth me sore
and in maner confoundeth me before the
that I am so vnstable and so weyke and
so frayle to resyste my passyons. And
though they drawe me nat alway to con-
sente: yet neuertheles theyr cruel assautes
be very greuous vnto me / so that it is in
maner tedious to me for to lyue in suche
batayle / but yet suche batayle is nat all
vnproffytable to me for therby I knowe

The thyrd booke. Folio. lxxxviii.
the better myne owne infirmitie; for I fe
well that suche wycked fantasie do rype
in me moche soner than they go awaye.
But wolde to god that thou moste stron-
gest god of Israell the loue of all fayth-
full soules woldeste vouchesafe to behold
the labour and the sorowe of me thy po-
reste seruaunt / and that thou woldest as-
syte me in all thyngs that I haue to do.
Strengthe me lord with heuynly strength
so that the olde enemy the fend / ne my
wretched fleshe whiche is nat yet fully
subiecte to the spirite / haue nat power ne
lordshype ouer me / agaynst whome I
musse fyght continually / whyle I shall
lyue i this miserable lyfe. But alas what
lyfe is this: where no trouble nor mysery
wanteth / where also euery place is full of
snarcs and of mortall enemyes for one
trouble or temptation goynge awaye: a
nother cometh / & the fyfte conflict yet
durynge: many other sodenly rype / mo
than can be bought / howe may this lyfe
therfore be loued that hath suche bytter-
nes and that is subiecte to so many mys-
eries / and how may it be called a lyfe that
bryngeth forth so many dethes & so ma-
ny ghosly infections / and yet it is belo-

Ampta.

Al.

The thyrde booke.

ned and moche deelyted in of many psons
The worlde is ofte reproved that it is de
ceytfull & vayne and yet it is nat lyghtly
forfaken (especially) whan the concupiscē
ces of the fleshe be suffered to haue reuele
some thynges styre a man to loue the
worlde & some to despyse it the concupy
sence of the fleshe/the concupysence of the
eye/and the pryde of the herte: styre mā
to loue the worlde. But the paynes & the
myseres that folowe of it/causeth hatred
and tediousnes of it againe. But alas for
forowe a lytell delectacyon ouercometh
the mynde of them that be moche set to
loue the worlde/and dryueth out of theyr
hertes al heuēly desyres/in somothe that
many accompte it as a toy of paradise to
lyue vnder suche sensyble pleasures / and
that is bycause they neither haue sene ne
tasted the swetnes in god ne the inwarde
gladnes that cometh of vertues. But
they that persytely dyspyse the worlde &
that study to lyue vnder holy dyscyplne
be nat ignorant of the heuēly swetnes
that is promysed vnto ghostely lyuers / &
they se also howe greuously the world er
reth and howe greuously it is deceyued in
dyuers maners.

Howe a man shulde reste in god
aboue all thyngc. The. xxiij.

Chapitre.

ABoue all thinges & in all thinges
reste thou my soule i thy
lorde god/for he is the eternal
reste of all Angelles and sayntes. Gyue
me lorde Iesu this speciall grace for to re
ste me in the / aboue all creatures / aboue
all helthe and sayntes / aboue all glory &
honoure / aboue al dignyte and power / a
boue all connyng and polycy / aboue all
tyches and craftes / aboue all gladnes of
body and soule / aboue all fame and pray
syngc / aboue all swetnes and consolacion
aboue all hope and repromissyon / aboue
all meryte and desyre / aboue all gyftes
and rewarde that thou mayste gyue or
sende besyde thy selfe. And aboue all
ioye and myghte that mannes herte or
mynde maye take or seie. And also a
boue all Angelles and Archaungelles / &
aboue all the company of heuently spyry
tes / aboue all thynges visibill and inui
sibill / and aboue all thyngc that is nat
hyr selfe. For thou lorde god arte moost

Impta.

M.ii.

The thyrde boke.

beste / moſte hygheſt / moſte myghteſt /
moſte ſufficiēt / and moſte ful of goodnes /
moſte ſweete / moſte cōſoꝛtable / moſt faire /
moſte loupuge / moſte noble / moſte glori-
ous aboue all thyng / in whome all good-
nes is to gether perſytl̃y and fully / hath
ben & ſhall be. And therfore what ſo euer
thou gyeſt me beſyde me ſelfe it is lytell
and inſufficient to me for my herte maye
nat reſte ne fully be pacified but in the / ſo
that is aſſende aboue all gyftes and alſo
aboue all maner of thynges that be crea-
ted. ¶ O my lord Jeſu Chriſte moſt lo-
upnge ſpouſe / moſte pureſt louer and go-
uernour of euery creature / who ſhal gyue
me wyngs of perſyte lyberty that I may
fle hyghe and reſte me in the. ¶ O whan
ſhall I fully tente to the & ſe & ſele howe
ſweete thou arte / whan ſhall I hooly ga-
ther my ſelfe to gether in the ſo perſytl̃y
that I ſhall nat for thy loue ſele me ſelfe /
but the onely aboue my ſelfe : and aboue
all bodely thynges and that thou vſyte
me in ſuche wyſe as thou doſte viſyte thy
faythfull louers. Nowe I ofte mourne &
complayne the myſerpes of this lyfe and
with ſorowe & wo bere them with ryght
great heuynes for many euyll thynges

The thyrde boke. Folio. lxxxix.

happen dayly in this lyfe/which ofte tymes trouble me and make me very heuy and greatly darken myn vnderstādyng. They hyndre me greatly & put my mynde from the and so encōbre me many wayes that I can nat haue fre mynde and cleue desyre to the/ne haue thy swete embrasynges that to thy blessed saintes be alwaye presente. wherfore I beseeche the lord Christe Iesu that the syghinges and the inwarde desyres of my herte with my manyfolde desolacions may somewhat moue the and inclyne the to here me. ⁊ O Iesu the lyght and bryghtnes of cuerlastinge glory/the ioye and conforte of all christen people that are walkyng & labouryng as pylgrimes in wyldernes of this world my herte cryeth to the by styl desyres without voyce & my scylēce speketh vnto the & sayth thus: ⁊ Howe longe taryeth my lord god to come to me / verely I truste that he wyl shortly come to me his poorest seruānt and conforte me and make me ioyous and glad in hym. And that he wyl deliuer me frō all angusthe and sorowe. Come lord come/for without the I haue no glady dāy / ne houre/ for thou arte all my ioye and gladnes and

The thyrde booke.

without the my soule is barayne & voyde
I am a wretche and in maner in prison/
& bounde with fetters tyll thou through
the light of my gracious presence vouch
saufe to vylte me and to refreshe me / &
to brynge me agayne to lyberte of spirite
and that thou vouchesaufe to shewe thy
fauorable and louely countenaunce vnto
me. Let other seke what they wyll / but
truely there is nothyng that I wyll seke
nor that shal please me / but thou my lord
god my hope and euerlastyng helthe. I
shall nat cesse of prayer: tyll thy grace re-
tourne to me agayne and that thou speke
inwardly to my soule / and saye thus. Lo
I am here / I am come to the for thou
hast called me / thy teares & the desyres
of thy herte: thy mkenes and thy contri-
ciō / haue bowed me downe and brought
me to the. And I shall saye agayne / lord
I haue called the / and I haue desyred to
haue the / redy to forsake all thynges for
the / thou firste hast cryed me to seke the.
wherfore be thou alway blessed that hast
shewed such goodnes to me after the mul-
tytude of the mercy / what hath thy ser-
uaunt lord moze to do or say / but that he
meken hym selfe before thy maieste and

The thyrde booke. Folio. xc.
euer haue in mynde his owne iniquyte.
There is none lyke to the lord in heu-
ne in erthe: thy workes be good thy iuge-
mentes be ryght wyse and by thy prou-
dence all thynges be gouerned / wherefore
to the that art the wysdome of the father
be euclastyng ioye and glory / O hum-
bly besetche the that my body and soule /
my herte and tonge and all thy creatur-
es may alwaye laude the and blesse the.
Amen.

Of remembryng of the great and
manysolde benefaytes of god.
The. xxiii. Chapitre.

O Be myn herte lord: in to the be-
holdyng of thy lawes & in thy
comandementes teache me to
walke / grue me grace to knowe and to
vnderstande thy wyll and with great re-
uerence and dilygent consyderacion to re-
membre thy manysolde benefaytes that
I may fro henceforth yelde to the due tha-
kynges for them agayne. But I knowe
and confesse it for trouthe that I am nat-
able to yelde to the condygne thankyn-
ges for the lesse benefayte that thou hast

gyuen me/for I am lesse than the lesse be-
 nefactre that thou haste gyuen. And whā
 I beholde thy noblenes and thy worthy-
 nes my spirite dzedeth and trebleth verp
 fore for the greatnes therof. ¶ O lordc al
 that we haue in body and in soule within
 forth and withoutforth naturally or sup-
 naturall/they be they benefactes & shewe
 the openly to be a blessed and a good be-
 nefactoure of whome we haue receyued
 suche gyftes and thoughe one hath recey-
 ued more / and a nother lesse: yet they all
 be thy gyftes and without the / the lesse
 can nat be had/and he that hath more re-
 ceuyed maye nat ryghtfully gloriſye him
 selfe therein as though he had gotten it by
 his owne meryte: we exalte hym selfe a-
 boue other / nor dysdanye other / nor dys-
 spise his inferiours therfor/for he is grea-
 test and moſte acceptable to the/that lesse
 ascribeth to hym selfe & that is for suche
 gyftes the more meke & the more deuout
 in peldynge thankyngeſ to the for them
 agayne. And he that throughe mekenes
 can holde hym selfe moſte vyle and moſte
 vnworthy of al other/is the more apte to
 receyue of thy hande more larger gyftes.
 And he that hath receyued the ſewer gpf

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The thyrde boke Folio. xci.
tes ought nat therfor to be heuy ne to dis-
dayne at it / ne to be enuyous agaynste
them that haue receyued the greater/ but
rather he ought to lyfte his mynde vp-
warde to the & hyghly to laude & praise
thy name that thou so lyberally / so lo-
uyngly / and so frely without acceptynge
of persons: departeste thy giftes amonge
thy people/ all thynges come of the & ther-
fore thou arte in all thynges to be blessed
Thou knowest what is expedient to be gy-
uen to euery persone and why one hath
lesse and an other more / it is nat to vs to
reason or dyscusse : but to the onely by
whome the merytes of euery man shalbe
dyscussed. wherfore lord I accompte it
for a great benefayte nat to haue many
gyftes wherby outwardly and after man-
nes iugement laude and prayfynge shulde
folowe . And ouer that as me semeth all
though a man consyder and beholde his
owne pouerty & the vplenes of his owne
persone he ought nat therfore take greife
or heuynes/ or deiection/ but rather to re-
ceyue thereby great gladnes of soule / for
thou haste chosen & daily doste chose pore
meke persons and suche as be dyspyssed in
the worlde/ to be thy sampler and house-

The thyrde boke .

holde scruauntes / wytnes thy Apostles
whome thou madeste prynces of all the
worlde whiche neuertheles were conue
saunt amonge the people without com
playnyng or myllayge so meke & sym
ple without all malyce and disceyte that
they ioyed to suffre reprofes for thy name
so farforth that suche thig as the world
abhorreth and fleeth they coneyted with
great desyre / thus it appereth that there
ought nothyng so moche to comforte &
glad thy louer and hym that hath recey
ued thy benefaytes as that thy wyll and
pleasure in hym be fulfilled after thy eter
nall disposicion of hym from the begyn
nyng / wherwith he oughte to be so well
contented and pleased that he wolde as
gladly be holden lesse : as other wolde be
holden mooste / and as pacifull wolde he be
as well pleased in the loweste place as
in the hyghest / and as glad to be despised
and abicete and of no name ne reputaciō
in the worlde as other to be nobler or
greater / for thy wyll lordes the honour
of thy name ought to excell all thynges
& more ought it to please and comforte
thy lover than all other benefaytes gyuen
or that myght be gyuen vnto hym.

The shynde boke. Folio. xcii.

Of foure thynges that brynge peace
in to the soule. The. xxb. Chapitre.

MI lone: nowe shal I teache the
the very true way of peace and
of perfyte lyberte. **O** lord Ie
su do as thou sayste for that is ryght ioy
ous for me to here / study my lone rather
to fulfyll an other mannes wyl thā thyn
owne chose alway to haue lytell wordly
ryches rather thā moche / seek also the lo
weste place & desyre to be vnder other ra
ther than aboue / and coueyt alwayc and
praye that the wyl of god be hoosly done
i the. No suche a persone entreteth sothfast
ly in to the very true way of peace and in
ward quietnēs. **O** lord this shorte les
son that thou haste taught me cōteyneth
in it selfe moche hyghe perfeccyon. It is
shorte in wordes but it is full of sentence
and frutefull in vertue / for if it were well
and saythfuly kepte of me / vnrestfulnes
shulde nat so lyghtly sprynge in me as it
hathe done for as ofte as I fele my selfe
vnrestfull and nat contēted / I fynde that
I haue gone from this lesson and from
this good and swete doctryne. But
thou lord Ihesu that all thynges haste

The thyrde boke.
vnder thy gouernaunce & alway loueste
the helth of mannes soule encrease more
grace in me that I may from henceforth
fulfyll these teachynges/and that I may
do alwaye that shall be to thy honour &
to the helth of my soule. Amen.

☞ A prayer agaynste euyll thoughtes.
The. xxvi. Chapitre.

O lord Iesu: I beseeche the be
nat far fro me but come shortly
& helpe me/for vayne thoughtes
haue rylen in myne herte & worldly dredes
haue troubled me very sore / howe shall
I breke them downe / howe shall I passe
vnhurte without thy helpe / I shall go be
fore the sayeth our lord: & I shall dryue
awaye the pryde of thy herte / than shall
I set open to the/the way of ghostly know
lege and shall shewe to the the priuies of
my secretes. O lord do as thou sayst and
than shall flee from me all wycked fanta
sies / and truly this is my hope and my
only conforste/to fle to the in euery trou
ble stedfastly to truste in the/inwardly to
call the/& patiently to abyde thy comyng
and thy heuently consolacions: whiche I

The thyrde boke. Folio. xciii.
trulie shall shortly come to me. Amen.

✠ A prayer for the clearynge of mānes
mynde. The. xxvii. Chapitre.

Alarifie me lord Iesu with the
clerenes of the euerlastig lyght/
and dyspue out of my herte al ma-
ner of derkenes and all bayne imagyna-
cions & violent temptacions/syght strōg-
ly for me/and dyspue awaye the euyl bea-
stes/that is to saye all my euyl and wy-
ked cōcupiscences that peace of consciēce
may entre and haue full rcuele in me and
that habundaunce of laude and praisyng
of thy name / may sounde contynually in
the chambze of my soule : That is to say.
In a pure and in a clene cōscience in me.
Cōmaunde the windes and tempestes of
pride to cesse/byd the see of worldly coue-
tyse to be in rest / & charge the northern
wynde/that is to saye:the fendes tempta-
cion that it blowe nat / & thā shalbe great
tranquylte and peace in me. Sende out
thy lyghte & thy trouth of ghosly know-
lege:that it may shyne vpon the erth ba-
rayne and dysc & sende downe thy grace
from aboute & therewith anoynts my dysc

The thyrde booke.
herte. And gyue me the water of inly deuotion to moyste therewith the drynes of my soule that it may byynge forth some good fruite that shalbe lypynge and pleasant to the. Kysse vp my mynde that is sore oppressed with the heuie burden of synne/and lyfte vp my desyre to the loue of heuently thynges/that by a taste of the heuently felicitye it maye loth to thynke on any earthly thynges. Take me lord and deliuer me from the vyle consolacyon of creatures / whiche muste of necessity shortly perishe and fayne. For there is no thing create that may fully satisfie myne appetyte. Joyne me therefore to the with a sure bonde of heuently loue for thou only satisfyest to thy louer. And without the all thynges be vayne and of no substance.

That it is nat good to serche curiously a nother mannes lyfe.

The. xxviii. Chapitre.

M I sone sayth our lord: take thou be nat curious i serchyng of a nother mānes lyfe ne that thou busy nat thy selfe with thingz that

The thyrde boke. Folio. xciii.

belong nat to the/what is this or that to
the/folowe tohu me/what is this tot he
whether this mā be good or bad: or whe-
ther he saye or do this or that. Thou ne-
dest nat to answer for a nother mannes
ded; but for thyne owne ded; thou muste
nedely answer. why dost thou thā medle
where nedeth nat . I se and knowe eue-
ry mā/and euery thyng vnder the sonne
I se and beholde/and howe it is with eue-
ry persone what he thynketh: what he
wylleth and to what ende his werke dra-
weth is open to me . And therfore all
thynges are to be referred to me . Kepe
thy selfe alwaye in good peace and suffre
hym that wyl al gates serche a nother
mannes lyfe be as busy as he wyl . And
in the ende shal fal vpon hym as he hath
done and sayd/for he can nat dysceiue me
what so euer be he if thou admonyshe a-
ny persone for his soule helth. Loke thou
do it nat to get the therby any name or
fame in the worlde/ne to haue the samp-
lyartye or pryuate loue of any persone/
for suche thynges cause moche vniquet-
nes of mynde / and wyl make and cause
the also to lese the rewarde that thou shul-
dest haue of god/and wyl brynge great

The thyrde boke.

derkenes in to thy soule. I wolde gladly speke to the my wordes & open to the the secrete mysteres of fraternall correction: if thou woldest prepayre thy soule redy a gaynste hym commynge: & that thou woldest open the mouthes of thy herte sayth fully to me. Be thou prouydent walke diligently in prayer/ meken thy selfe in euery thyng/and thou shalt fynde great comforte in god and lytell resistence in thyne eyn christen.

¶ In what thyng peace of herte and greatest profyte of man standeth.

The. xxii. Chapitre.



I sone sayth our lord Iesu: I sayd to my dyscyples thus.

My peace I leue with you/ my peace I gyue you/ nat as the worlde gyueh/ but moche more than it may gyue. All mē desyre peace: but all mē wil nat do that belōgeth to peace/ my peace is with the meke & mylde in herte. And thy peace shalbe in more pacience/ if thou wyll here me & folowe my wordes thou shalt haue great plētice of peace. O lord what shal I do to come to that peace Thou shalt in al thy warkes take good hede what thou

doeste and sayest / and thou shalt set all
thy hole intent to please me / and nothing
shalt thou coueyt or seke without me / and
of other mennes dedes thou shalt nat iuge
presumptuously / ne thou shalt nat medle
with thynges that pertaine nat to the.
If thou do thus it may be that thou shalt
lytell or seldome be troubled / but neuer
theles to fele no tyme no maner of trou-
ble nor to suffer no heuynes in body ne in
soule / is nat the state of this lyfe but of
the lyfe to come. Thynde nat therefore
that thou haste founde the true peice for
thou fealest no grete / ne that all is well
with the whan thou haste none aduersa-
ry / ne that all is pacyte for that every
thyng comethe after thy mynde. Repe
that thou art great in godes syght or spe-
cially beloued of hym for thou hast great
feruoure in deuotion and great sweteness
in contemplation / for a true louer of ver-
tue is nat knowen by all these thynges /
nor the true perfection of man standethe
nat in them (wherin than lord) In offe
tyng of a man with all his herte hooly
to god nat sekynge hym selfe ne his owne
wyl: neyther in great thyng nor in small
in tyme nor in eternite / but that he abyde

Amys.

Al. alway

The thyrde boke.
alway one/and yeide alway lyke thankes
to god for thynges plesaunt and displea
saunte: weyng them all in one lyke ba
launce as in his loue / and if he be also so
stronge in god that whan inwarde conso
lation is withdrawen he can yet styre
his herte to suffre more yf god so wyll /
and yet he iustifyeth nat hym selfe ne prai
seth nat hym selfe therfore / as holy and
ryght wyse / than he walketh in the verye
true waye of peace and than he may well
haue a sure and a perfyte hope and truste
that he shall se me face to face in euerlast
yngre ioye and fruytyon in the kyngdome
of heuen. And if he can come to a perfyte
and a ful contempt and dyspyssyng of hym
selfe: than shall he haue full haboundaunce
of rest and peace in the ioye euerlastyng:
after the measure of his gyfte. Amen.

**Of the lybertie/excellencie/and
worthynes of a free mynde
The. xxi. Chapitre.**

(/:/:/:/)

Inde it is the warke of a per
fyte man / neuer to sequestre
hys mynde frome the behol
dyng

The thyrde booke. Folio .lxxxvii.
byng of heuently thynges / and amonge
many cures: to go as he were without
cure / nat in the maner of an ydle or of a
dissolate persone: but by the speere all pre-
rogatyue of a fre mynde alwaye bulg in
goddess scrupes nat cleupng by inordinate
affection to any creature. I beseeche the
therefore my lord Iesu mooste meke and
mercypfull that thou kepe me from the bus-
synes and cures of the worlde: and that I
be nat ouer moche iniquyted with the ne-
cessytes of the bodely kynde / ne that I be
nat taken with the voluptuous pleasures
of the worlde ne of the fleshe / and that in
lyke wyse thou preserve me from all hyu-
derauer of the soule / that I be nat bro-
ken with ouer moche heynesse / sorowe /
nor worldly dyde. And by these peti-
cons I aske nat onely to be deliuered from
suche vanytes as the worlde despyeth.
But also frome suche miseries as greue
the soule of me thy seruaunte / with the
common malediction of mankynde: that
is with corruption of the bodily felynge
wherewith I am so greued and letted that
I may nat haue lyberte of spyrte to be-
hold the whā I wold. O lord god that art
swetnes vnspehable tourne fro bitternes
Ampa. R. II. 10

The thyꝛde booke.

to me all fleshely delectes / whiche wolde
drawe me fro the loue of eternall thynges
to the loue of a shorte and a vyle delecta-
ble pleasure / let nat the fleshe and blode
ouercome me / ne yet the worlde with his
shorte glorie disceyue me / nor the synde
with his thousandfolde craftes supplante
me / but gyue me ghostly strengthe in res-
sistynge / pacience in sufferynge / and con-
staunce in perseuerynge. Gyue me also for
all worldly consolations the moste swete
consolation of the holy ghoste. And for
all fleshely loue sende in to my soule the
loue of thy holy name. To meate / drynke /
clothyng / and all other necessaryes for
the body be paynfull and troubelous to a
feruent spyrite whiche if it myght wolde
alway rest in god and in gostly thynges.
Graunte me therfore grace to vse suche
bodely necessities temporately and that
I be nat deceyued with ouermuche desire
to them. To forsake all thynges it is nat
lawfull for the bodely kynde must be pre-
serued / and to seke superfluous thynges
more for pleasure than for necessity / thy
holy lawe prohibytethe: for so the fleshe
wolde rebell agaynst the spyrte / wher-
fore lord I beseeche the that thy hande of
grace

The thyrde boke. Folio.lxxxxviii.
grace maye so gouerne me and teache me
that I excede nat by any maner of super-
fluite. Amen. (..)

That priuat loue moste letteth a man
from god. The.xxvi.Chapitre.

O Sonne(sayth our lord) it be-
houeth the: to gyue all for all /
and nothyng to kepe to the of
thyne owne loue. For the loue of thy selfe
more hurteth the than any other thyng
in this worlde / after thy loue and after
thyne affection / euery thyng cleucth to
the more or lesse. If thy loue be pure / sym-
ple and wel ordered thou shalt be without
inordynate affection to any creature. Con-
ceyte therfore nothyng that is nat leful
for the to haue / and haue nothyng that
may let the from ghostly trauayle or that
may take fro the inwarde liberty of soule.
It is meruayle that thou comittest nat
thy selfe fully to me with all thy herte:
with all thynges that thou mayste haue
or desire / why arte thou thus consumed
with vayne sorowe / why arte thou wored
with superfluous cures: stande at my wpl
and thou shalt fynde nothyng that shall
Impta. Anti. hurt

The thyrde boke.

hurte the oꝛ hynder the / but if thou seeke
this thyng oꝛ that / oꝛ woldest be in this
place oꝛ in that foꝛ thyꝝ owne profyte and
foꝛ thyꝝ owne pleasure / thou shalt neuer
be in rest ne thou shalt neuer be fre fro
som trouble of mynde / foꝛ in every place
shalbe founde some thyng that wyl my
like the, Transitory thyngs whan they be
had and greatly multiplied in the world/
do nat alway help mannes soule to peace
but rather whan they be dyspyed & fully
cut out of the loue and desyre of the herte
and that is nat to be vnderstand onely of
golde & syluer and other worldly ryches /
but also of desyre of honours & prayfynge
of the worlde: whiche shortly vanysmeth
and passeth away as doth the smoke with
the wynde / the place helpethe lytell if the
spyrte of feruoure be awaye. Also the
peace that a man getteth outwarde shall
nat longe stande hole if it be voyde fro the
true inwarde peace of herte / that is to say
though thou chaunge thy place yet it shall
lytell amende the / but thou stande stable &
stedfast in me: foꝛ by newe occasions that
shal dayly ryse thou shalt fynde that thou
hast fled & percase moche more peryllous
and moche more greuous thynges than
the fyrste were.

A prayer

The thynde booke. folio. lxxxviii.

¶ A prayer for the purgynge of mannes
soule/and for heuently wysdome and
the grace of god to be opteyned
and had. The. xxxiii.

Chapitre.

(:::)

Onferme me lord by the grace
of the holy ghoſte/ and gyue me
grace to be ſtrong in wardly in
ſoule: and auoyde out therof all vnpro-
fytable buſynes of the worlde and of the
fleſhe/ that it be nat led by vniſtable de-
ſyres of cethly thynges. And that I may
behold all thynges in this worlde as they
be/ tranſitory and of ſorte abydyng: and
me alſo to go with them/ for nothyng
vnder the ſonne may longe abyde/ but all
is vanite and affliction of ſpyte. O how
wyſe is he that ſeleth and vnderſtandeth
this to be true that I haue ſayd/ gyue me
lord therfore heuently wysdome that I
may lerne to ſeke theſe to fynd the. And
about al thynges to loue the and al other
thyngs to vnderſtand and knowe as they
be after the ordre of thy wysdome & none
otherwyſe. And gyue me grace alſo wyſely

Amptis.

A.iii.

to

The thyrde booke.
so withdrawe me fro them that flater me
and patiently to suffre them that greue
me. For it is great wysdome nat to be mo-
ued with euery blaste of wordes nor to
geue care to hym that flatereth as dothe
the Mycarmayde. The way that is thus
begon / shall brynge hym that walketh in
it to a good and a blessed endynge.

**Agaynst the euill sayenges of detrac-
tours. The. xxiii. Chapitre.**

No sonne sayth our sauour Christe:
Thou shalt nat take it to grete:
though some persons thynke euill or say
euill of the that thou woldest nat gladly
here / for thou shalt yet thynke worse of
thy selfe: and that no man is so euill as
thou arte. If thou be well ordered with
infort in thy soule thou shalt nat moche
care for suche sleynge wordes. And it is
no lytel wysdome a man to kepe hym selfe
in silence and in godd peace whan euill
wordes be spoken to hym / and to tourne
his herte to god: and nat to be troubled
with mannes iudgemēt: let nat thy peace
be in the hertes of men / for what so euer
they say of the good or bad thou arte nat
therfor

The thyrde booke. Folio. lxxxix.

therfore an other man / for as thou arte;
thou arte. where is the true peace and
the true glory/it is nat in me: Yes truly
Therefore he that neyther despyeth to
please man: ne dyeth nat to dysplease
hym: Shall haue great plenty of peace.
for of inordinate loue and vayne dyde
cometh all vniquietnes of hert and vni
restfulnes of the mynde. (:::)

How almyghty god is to be inwards
ly called vnto: in tyme of trybula
cyon. The. xxiii. Chapitre.

Iorde thy name be blessed for
euer that thou woldeste this
temptation and tribulation
shulde fall vpon me. I may nat escape it:
but of necessity I am dryuen to fle to the
that thou vouchsafe to helpe me: and to
tourne all in to my godly profyte.
Olorde I am now in trouble and it is
nat well with me for I am greatly bered
with this presente passion // and nowe
mooste beste beloued father what shall I
saye: I am nowe taken with anguyshes
and troubles on every syde // saue me in
this houre but I truste that I am comyng
Impta.

The thyrde boke.

into this houre that thou shalt be lauded
and prayed whan I am perfytely made
meke before the: and that I am cleerly de
liuered by the / be it therfore pleasaunte
to the to deliuer me / so) what may I most
spitfull w:re the do o) whether maye I go
without the. Gve me patience now at
this tyme in all my troubles: helpe me
my lord god / and I shall nat fere ne drede
what troubles so euer fall vpon me. And
nowe what shall I say: but that thy wyl
be done in me. I haue deserued to be trou
bled and greued / and therfore it behoueth
that I suffre as long as it shall please the
but wold to god that I might suffre glad
ly till the furious tēpestes were quet pas
sed / & that quietnes of herte myght come
agayne. Thy myghty hand lord is strong
proughe to take this trouble fro me and
to asswage the cruell assautes thereof that
I do nat bitterly saye as thou hast oft ty
mes done to me before this tyme / and the
more herte that it is to me the more light
it is to the. And whā I am cleerly deliue
red by the / than shall I say. This is the
chaūgynge of the ryght hand of hym that
is hyghest: that is the blessed Trinite / to
whome be ioye / honoure and glorie euer
lastyngely. Amen.

The thyrde booke. Folio. C.

Of the helpe of god to be asked / and
of a full truste to recouer through
deuoute prayer our former
grace. The. xxxv.

Chapitre.

MI sonne I am thy lord that sendeth
comfort in tyme of tribulation / come
therfore to me whan it is nat well with
the. This is it that letteth the most / that
thou tournest the ouer slowly to me / for
before thou pray hertely to me thou seekst
many other comfortes and refreshest thy
spyrtes in outwarde thynges. And there-
fore it is / that all that thou doste : lytell
anapleth the tyll thou can beholde and se
that I am he that sendeth comforte to all
that faythfully do call to me / and that
there is nat without me any profytable
counsaille ne perfyte remedy. But nowe
take a good spyrite to the and after thy
troubles be thou comforted in me / and in
the lyghte of my mercy : haue thou full
truste / for I am nere to the to helpe the
and to restore the agayne nat onely to like
grace as thou haddest fyrste : but also to
moche more & great abundaunce. Is there
any thing herde or impossible to me / or any
I lyke

The thynde boke.

I lyke to hym that sayeth a thyng and
 doth it nat: where is thy saythe. Stande
 strongly and perscuerantly in me be sted.
 faste abydyng my promys and thou shalt
 haue comforte in suche tyme as it shall be
 mooste expedient to the. Abyde abyde and
 tary for me and I shall come soone and
 helpe the. It is temptation that bereth
 the a bayne drede that fereth the moche.
 But what auaiethliche fere or drede for
 thynges that perchaunce shall neuer come
 but that the ghostly enemy wolde thou
 shuldest haue sorowe vpon sorowe. Bere
 therfore pacyently thy troubles that be
 presente / and drede nat ouermoeche tho
 that be to come / for it suffysethe to euery
 daye his owne malyce. It is a bayne
 thyng and an vnprofytable to be heuie
 or glad for thynges that perchaunce shal
 neuer happen ne come. But it is the vn-
 stablenes of man that he wyl be decey-
 ued so lyghtly to folowe the suggestion
 of the enemy / for he caret he nat whether
 he maye deceyue by true suggestion or by
 false / ne whether it be by loue of thynges
 presente: or by drede of thynges to come.
 Therfore be thou nat troubled ne drede
 thou nat / truste strongly in me and in my
 mercy:

mercy
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The thyrde booke Folio. C. i.

mercy: haue perfyte hope / for whan thou
weneſt that thou arte ryghte farre fro me
oſte tymes I am ryghte nere vnto the /
and whan thou weneſt that all is loſte /
than oſte tymes foloweth the greater re-
warde. It is nat therfore all loſt though
ſome thyng happen agaynſte thy wyll /
and thou ſhalte nat iudge therein after thy
outwarde ſelynge / ne thou ſhalt nat take
any greſe ſo ſore to herte / but that thou
ſhalte haue good truſte to eſcape it : ne
thou ſhalte nat thynke thy ſelfe all hooly
forſaken of me : though I ſende the for a
tyme ſome heuynes and trouble / for that
is the ſeker way to the kyngdom of heuē /
and doubtles it is more expedient to the
and to other my ſeruauntes that ye ſom-
tyme be proued with aduerſites than that
ye haue alwaye all thynges after your
wylles / I knowe the hyd thought of man
and that it is moche expedient to the helth
of the ſoule that he be leſte ſomtyme to
hym ſelfe without ghoſtly ſauoure or con-
forte: leſt haply he be repled bp in to pride
and thynke hym ſelfe better than he is .
That I haue gyuen I may take awaye
and may reſtore it agayne whan me ſhall
lyſte / whan I gyue a thyng to any per-
ſone

The thyrd booke.

sonne it is myne owne that I haue gyuen
and whan I take it away agayne, I take
none of his for ouery good gyfte and euery
perpetuall rewarde cometh of me. If I
sende to the trouble or heuyness in what
wyse so euer it be: take it gladly and dis-
dayne it nat ne let nat thy herte faile the
therin / for I maye anone lyfte the vp as
gayne & tounne thy heuyness in to greates
ioye and ghosly gladnes / and verily I
am ryghtwyse and moche to be lauded
and praysed whan I do so with the / yf
thou vnderstande a ryghte: and beholde
thy selfe truly as thou arte / thou shalt
neuer be so directly heuy for no aduersy-
te / but rather thou shalt ioye therein and
thynke it as the greatestte gyfte that I
spare nat to scourge the with suche trou-
ble and aduersyte / for I sayde to my dis-
ciples thus. ¶ As my father loueth me
I loue you. ¶ And yet I sente them nat
forth in to the worlde to haue temporall
ioyes: but to haue great batayles / nat to
haue honours: but dyspytes / nat to be ydle
but to labour / nat to rest: but to brynge
forth moche good frute in paciencc and in
good workes. My sonne remembre wel these
wordes that I haue spoken to the for they
be true and can nat be denyed.

the
the
bynde
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al crea

The thyrde booke. Folio .L.ii.

Howe we shulde forget all creatures
that we myght fynde our creature.

The. xxxvi. Chapter.

Iorde I haue great nede of thy
grace and that of thy great sin-
guler grace or yf I may come
thether where no creature shall let me ne
hynder me fro the persyte beholdynge of
thee: as long as any transitory thyng
holdeth me or hath rule in me / I maye
nat be frely to thee, he coueynted to be with
out let that sayd thus. A who shall gyue
me wynges lyke to a Dove: that I may
fle in to the bosome of my sauyour and in
to the holes of his blessed woundes and
reste me there. I fe well that no man is
more restfull: nor more lpyng in this
worlde than is that man whiche alwaye
hath his mynde and his holt intente vp-
warde to god and nothyng despyteth of
the worlde. It behoueth hym therfore
that wolde persytely forsake hym selfe
and beholde thee / to surmounte all creatu-
res and hym selfe also / and throughe ex-
cesse of mynde to se and beholde that thou
maker of al thynges hast nothing amōge
al creatures lyke vnto thee / and but a man
be clerely

312. The thyrde boke.

be clerely delpyered fro the loue of crea-
tures he may nat fully tende to his crea-
toure / and that is the greatest cause why
there be so fewe contemplatyues / that is
to say : by cause there be so fewe that wyl-
fully wyl sequestre them selfe fro loue of
creatures . To contemplation is great
grace requyred / for it lyftech vp the soule
and rauysheth it vp in spirite aboue it
selfe . And but a man be lyfte vp in spirit
aboue hym selfe and be clerely delpyered
from all creatures as in his loue : and be
pcesytely and fully oned to god / what so
euer he can or what so euer he haue either
in vertue or connyng it is but lityll worth
afore god . Therefore he shall haue but ly-
tell vertue : and longe shall he tye hym in
erthely lyhynges that accomptethe any
thyng great or worth to be praysed but
onely god for all other thynges besydes
god are nought and for noughte are to be
accompted . It is great differēce betwene
the wysdome of a deuoute man lyghtned
by grace / and the connyng of a subtyll
and studious clerke / and that lernynge
is moche more noble & moche more wor-
thy that cometh by the influēce and gra-
cious gyft of god : thā that that is gottis

The thyrde boke. Folio. C. lll.

by the labour and study of mā. Many de
syre to haue the gyfte of contemplacyon/
but they wyll nat vse suche thyngs as be
requyred to cōtemplacion/and one great
let of contemplacion is /that we stande so
long in outwarde sygnes and in sensyble
thynges/and take no hede of perfyte mor
tifying of our body to the spirite: I wote
nat how it is/ne with what spirite: we be
led/ne what we pretende/we that be cal
led spirituall persons that we take grea
ter labour and study for transytoꝝ thy
nges / than we do to knowe the inwarde
state of our owne soule but alas for sorow
anone as we haue made a lytell recollec
cyon to god we renne forth to outwarde
thynges and do nat serche our owne con
science with due examynacyon as we
shulde do/ne we hede nat where our affec
tion restith ne we sorowe nat that our de
des so euill and so vncleane as they be.
The people corrupted the selfe with fles
hely vncleannes and therfore folowed the
great flode / and verely whā our inwarde
affection is corrupted/it is necessary that
our dedes folowynge therbypon be also cor
rupted. For of a cleane herte springeth the
frute of good lyfe. It is ofte tymes asked

Impta.

D. l.

The thyrde boke.

What dedes suche a man hath done / but
of what zeile or of what entent he dyd the
is lytell regarded / whether a mā be ryche
strong / sayre / able / a good wyter / a good
synger / or a good labourer is ofte enqy-
red but howe poore he is in spirite / howe
patient & meke / howe deuoute / and howe
inwardly tourned to god / is lytell regar-
ded. Nature beholdeth the outwarde dede
but grace tourned her to the inwarde in-
tente of the dede. The fyrste ofte decey-
ued / but the secōde putteth her truste hoo-
ly in god and is nat deceyned.

☞ Howe we shuld forsake our selfe and
thurste downe all couetyse out of our
herte. The. xxxvii. Chapitre.

M I sone sayth our lord : thou
shalte nat haue perfyte lyberty
of minde but thou holly forsake
thy selfe / all propyetaryes and al louers
of them selfe all couetous persones / cury-
ous / baynglorious / & all renners about.
And also suche as seke thynges softe & de-
lectable in this worlde and nat of Jesu
Christe / ofte saynyng & gredely sykyng
thyngs that shall nat longe endure / be as

men fettered and bounden with cheynes & haue no perfyte lyberty ne fredome of sperte/for all thynges shall perpyche that be nat wroughte of god / holde well in thy mynde this shorte worde/for sake all thynges and thou shalt fynde all thynges/for sake couetyse and thou shalt fynde great rest/pynte wel i thy mynd that I haue sayd/for whā thou haste fulfylled it thou shalt well knowe that it is true. & Lord this lesson is nat one dayes worke ne a play for chyldren/for it is coneyned the ful perfeccion of a religion. Also my sone thou oughtest not to be touned fro god ne to be any thyng dyscouraged fro his seruyce whā thou hereste the strayte lyfe of perfyte men / but rather thou oughtest to be prouoked therby to hygher perfeccion and at leste to desyre i herte that thou myghtest come therto. But wolde to god thou were fyrste come to this poynt that thou were nat a loue of thy self but that thou woldeste kepe my commaundementes and the cōmaundemētes of him that I haue appoynted to be thy father spirituall / for than thou shuldeste please me greatly & than all thy lyfe shulde passe

The thyrde boke.

forth in ioye & peace. Thou haste yet many thynges to forsake / whiche but thou can hooly forsake / thou shalt nat get that thou desyrest. And therfore I counsaile the to bye of me bryght thynnyng golde / that is to saye heuently wysdome that dyspyseth all erthly thynges / and caste fro the all worldly wysdome and all mannes conforste and all thynne owne affeccyons / and that thou chose to haue vyle thynges and abiecte / rather than precious & hygh in syght of the worlde / but the true heuently wysdome semeth to many to be vyle & lytell & well nyghe forgotten. Many can saye with theyr mouthe that it is good nat to desyre to be magnified i the world but theyr lyfe foloweth nat theyr sayng / and therfore they desyre it priuely i theyr herte / but yet that is the precious Margarete & the hyghe vertue that is hyd fro moche people for theyr presumption / get it who so may.

¶ Of the vnstablenes of mannes herte
and that our synall intent in
all thynges shulde be to
god. The. xxviii.
Chapitre.

The thyrde boke. Folio. C. v.

Mane : loke thou bpleue nat
thyne owne affeccion for it chā
geth ofte fro one to another as
long as thou lyuest thou shalt be subiecte
to chaūge habilitie whether thou wylt or
nat/as nowe glad/nowe sorowfull/nowe
pleased/nowe dyspleased/nowe deuoute/
nowe vndeuous/nowe lusty/nowe slouth
ful nowe heuy/now lightsoe. But a wise
man that is well taughte in ghostely tra
uayle standeth stable in all suche thynges
& forseth lytell what he feleth/ne of what
syde the wynde of vnstabilenes bloweth/
but all the intēte and study of his mynde
is / howe he may moste profyte in vertue
and fynally come to the moste fruytfull &
moste blessed ende. By suche a hool in
tente fully dyrected to god/may a man as
byde stedfaste & stable in hym selfe amōg
many aduersytes/and the more pure and
the more clene that his intēt is/the more
stable shall he be in euery storme. But a
las for sorowe the eye of mannes soule is
anone derked/for it beholdeth lightely de
lectable thynges that come of the worlde
and of the fleshe / in so moche that there
is seldome founde any persone that is fre
and clere fro the benymous desyre of he

The thyrde boke.

rynge of some tales or of some other fantasies / and that be theyr owne sekynge. In suche maner came the Jewes in to Betany / to Martha / and to Mary magdalene / nat for the loue of our lord Iesu but for to se Lazar whome he had reysed fro dethe to lyfe / werfore the eye of the soule is to be kepte full bryght that it be alwaye pure and cleane / and that it be aboue all passyng thynges hooly dyrected to god the whiche graunt vs to,

A M E N.

¶ Howe our lord god sauoureth to his loue sweetely aboute all thynges: & in all thynges. The.
xxxix. Chas
pitre.

Our lord god is to me all in all / & sayth he is so: what wolde / I more haue or what can I more desyre. ¶ And this is a sauoury worde and a swete to saye that our lord is to me all in all. But that is to hym that loueth the worde and nat the worlde. To hym that

The thyrde boke.

vnderstandeth this worde/is sayd ynough
but yet to repete it ofte is lykinge to him
that louethe/I may therfore more playn
ly speke of this mater and say/lorde whā
thou arte present to me:all thyng is ple
saunte and lykynge / but whan thou arte
absente all thyng is greuous and greate
ly myslykynge/whan thou comest thou
makeste myne herte restfull and byngest
in to it a newe ioye/thou makeste thy lo
uer to fele and vnderstande the trouthe &
to haue a true iugement in all thynges
& in all thynges to laude the and prayse
the. ¶ O lorde without the nothyng may
be longe lykynge ne pleasaunt/for if any
thyng shulde be lykynge and sauoury it
musste be through helpe of thy grace and
be tempered with the spicerie of thy wys
dome. To hym to whome thou sauourest
well: that shall nat sauoure well. And to
hym that thou sauourest nat well vnto
what maye be Joyfull or lykynge. But
worldly wyse men and they that sauoure
fleshely delytes sayle of this wysdome/
for in worldly wysdome is founde great
vanyte/and in fleshely pleasures is euer
lastynge dethe. Therefore they that fo
lowe the lorde by dispisynge of the worlde

The thyrde booke.

And by perfyte mortifiēg of their flesshely lustes/be knowen to be very wyse / for they be led fro vanyte to trouthe / and fro flesshely lpykynge to spirituall clēnes. To suche persones god sauoureth wonder swete. And what so euer they synde i creatures / they referre it all to the laude and to the praysynge of theyr creatoure / for they se well that there is great difference betwixt the creatoure and creatoure eternyte and tyme: and betwixte the lyghte made and the lyghte vnmade. O cuerlasting lyghte farre passyng all thynges that are made. Sende downe the beames of thy lyghtenynge / frome aboue and purifie gladde/and clarifye in me all the inwarde parties of my herte. Quyen my spirite with al the powers therof that it maye cleue faste and be ioyned to the inioyfull gladnes of ghostely rauynsynge. ¶ O whan shall that blessed houre come that thou shalt bysite me & gladde me with thy blessed presence / so that thou be to me all in all. As longe as that gyfte is nat gyuen to me/that thou be to me all i all / there shall be no full ioy in me. But alas for sorowe mine olde mā that is my flesshely lpykynge/ yet lyueth in

The thyrde boke. Folio. C. vi.

me and is nat yet fully crucified noz partially deed i me/foz yet stryucth the flesh strongly against the spirite and moueth great inwarde batayle agaynste me: and suffereth nat the kyngdome of my soule to lyue in peace / but thou good lord that haste the lordshype ouer all the power of the see/and doste all wage the streames of his flowynge. Arise and helpe me/brycke downe the power of myn enemies which alwaye moue this batayle in me. Shewe the greatnes of thy goodnes / and let the power of thy ryght hande be glorified in me / foz there is to me none other hope noz refuge/but in the onely my lorde/my god / to whome be ioye honoure and glorie euerlastyngly. Amen.

¶ That there is no full surete fro temptation in this lyfe. The xl. Chapitre.

Our lord sayth to his scruaunte thus/thou shalte neuer be seker fro temptation and tribulation in this lyfe. And therfore armour spirituall shall alwaye as long as thou lyest be necessary foz the. Thou arte amonge

The thyrde boke.

thyne enemyes and shalt be troubled and
bered with them on euery syde: but thou
vse in euery place the shelde of pacyence
thou shalt nat longe kepe the vnwounded
And ouer that if thou set nat thy herte
strongly in me with a redy wyll to suffre
all thynges pacyently for me/thou mayst
nat longe bere this ardoure ne come to
the rewarde of blessed sayntes. It beho-
uethe the therfore māly to passe ouer ma-
ny thynges and to vse a stronge hande as
gaynste all the obiections of the enemye.
To the ouercomer is promysed Angeles
fode and to hym that is ouercome is lefte
moche mysery. If thou seke reste in this
lyfe/howe shalt thou than come to the
rest euerlasting. Set nat thy selfe to haue
reste here/but to haue pacyence / and seke
the true sothfaste reste/nat in erthe but in
heuen/nat in man ne in any creature but
in god onely where it is. For the loue of
god thou oughtest to suffre gladly al thin-
ges/that is to say: all laboures/sorowes/
tēptacions/berations/anguysshes/nede-
nes/spkenes/injuries/cuyll saynges / re-
preuynges/oppresions/confusions/cor-
reccions and dyspplsynges. These helpe a
man greatly to vertues: these proue the

true
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The thyrd boke. Folio. C. viii.

true knyghte of Christe & make redy for
hym the heuenly crowne/ & our lord shal
yelde hym agayne euerlastyng rewarde
for his thorte labour/ and insynpte glory
for his transytory confusyon. Troweste
thou that thou shalt haue alway spirituall
all confortes after thy wyll. Nay nay my
saint; had the nat/ but many great grets
and dyuers temptacions and great desola-
cions/ but they were all with paciencce/
& more trusted in me than in the selfe/ for
they knewe wel that the passions of this
worlde be nat able of the selfe to gete the
glory that is ordeyned for the i the kyng
dome of heuen. wylte thou loke to haue
anone that other before the myghte vn-
nethes gette: afore great wepynges and
laboures. Abyde paciently the cōmyng
of our lord/ do manfully his bidding/ be
conforted in hym / mystruste hym nat/ ne
go nat backe fro his scrupce for payne ne
for drede / but lay forthe thy body & soule
constauntly to his honoure in all good bo-
dyly and ghostely laboures. And he shal re-
warde the agayne moste plentuously for
the good trauayle/ and shall be with the
and helpe the in euery trouble that shall
becfall vnto the / so muste it be. Amen.

The thyzde boke.

Agaynste the bayne iugementes
of man. The. xli. Chapitre.

I sone/ fyre thy hert stedfastly
in god/ and dyede nat the iuge-
ment of mā where thyne owne
conscience wytnesseth the be to innocent
& clere. It is ryght good and blessed/ som
tyme to suffre syche saynges / and it shall
nat be greuous to a meke herte whyche
trusteth more in god than in hym selfe/
many folke can saye many thynges and
yet lytell saythe is to be gyuen to theyr
saynges / and to please all men it is nat
possyble. For though saynt poule labou-
red all that he myght to haue pleased all
people in god/ and dyd to all men all that
he coude for theyr saluacion / yet neuer-
theles he coude nat let but that he was
sometyme iuged of other. He dyd for the
edyfienge and helthe of other as moche
as in him was/ but that he shold nat som
tyme be iuged of other or nat be dyspyssed
of other/ he coude nat let. wherfore he co-
mitted all to god that knoweth al thyng
and armed hym selfe with pacyence and
mekenes agaynst all thyng that myght
be vntreuly spoken agaynst hym. And

The thyrde boke. folio. Lix.

neuertheles sōtyme he answered agayne
lesse that by his scyence hurte or bynde-
raunce myght haue growē to other/what
arte thou than that dyedest so soze a mozt
tall man. This day he is/and to morowe
he appereth nat dyede god and thou shalt
nat neede to dyede man / what maye man
do with the in wordes or iniuries/he hur-
teth him selfe more than the / and in the
ende he shall ne fle the iugement of god
what so euer he be / haue alwaye god be-
fore the eye of thy soule and stryue nat a-
gayne by multiplyeng of wordes. And if
thou seme for a tyme to suffre confusion/
that thou haste nat deserued / dysdayne
thou nat therfore/nor throughe impacien-
ce minyshe nat thy rewarde. But rather
lyfte vp thy herte to god in heuen for
he is able to delpyer the from all cō-
fucion and wronges and to re-
warde euery man after his
deserte and moche more
than he can deserue.



The thyrd boke.

☞ Of a pure and a hole forsakynge of
our selfe and of our owne wyl/that
we myght gete the fredome of
spirite & folowe the wyl of
god. The. xlii. chapitre

Whiche sonne sayth our lord: forsake
thy selfe & thou shalt finde me
stande without eleccion & wit-
hout folowynge of thyne owne will/ & also
without al perty/ & thou shalt moche p
fite in grace for if thou hooly resygne thy
selfe in to my handes & take nothyng to
the agayne / thou shalt haue the more
grace of me. & A lord/ how oft shall I re-
sygne me to the / and in what thynges
shall I forsake me selfe. & Alwaye and in
euery houre in great thynges & in smale.
I excepte none for in all thynges I wyl
fynde the naked and poore and voyde of
thyne owne wyl / els howe mayste thou
be myne and I thyne/ but thou be clerely
byratte within & without of thyne owne
wyl. And the soner that thou canste
byrynge it aboute/ so moche the soner shal
it be better with the/ & the more fully and
the more clerely that thou can doo it/ the
more fully shalt thou please me / and the

more shalt thou wyne. Some persones
resygne them to me / but it is with some
excepcion for they truste nat fully to me /
and therfore they studye to prouyde for
them selfe. And some that the begynnyng
offre all to me / but after whan any temp-
tacion commeth they tourne agayne to
theyr owne wyll and to that they promys-
sed to forsake / and therfore they profyte
lytell in vertue. And truely suche perso-
nes shall neuer come to parfayte cleannes
and to fredome of herte ne to the grace of
familiarite with me / but throughe a hole
parfayte forsaking of hym selfe & throughe
a dayly offerynge of them & of all theyr
hooly to me / for without that maye no
man haue parfayte frucion and onyenge
with me. I haue said to the many tymes
before and yet I saye to the agayne / for-
sake thy selfe and resygne thy selfe hooly
to me and thou shalt haue great inward
peace in me. Byue al for all and nothing
kepe to thy selfe of thyne owne wyll / but
stande purely & stably in me & thou shalt
haue me and thou shalt be so fre in herte
and in soule that darkenes of conscyence
ne thraldome of synne / shall neuer haue po-
wer i the. Endeuous thy selfe therfore to

The thyrde boke.

gette this fredome of spirite that I speke
of/praye for it/study for it/and allwape de
syre it i thy herte/that is to say that thou
mayste clerely be spoyled and be byraste
of all propertie and of thyne owne wyll/
and that thou beyng naked of al worldly
thynges mayst folowe me that longe na
ked for the vpon the crosse/and that thou
mayste dye to thy selfe and to all worldly
thynges also/as in thy loue and blessedly
to lyue to me. Thā if thou do thus all va
nytes and all beyne fantasies/and all su
perfluous cures of the worlde and of the
flesche shall fayle & fade and goo awaye.
Than also immoderate drede and inordy
nate loue shall dye in the/and thou shalt
blessedly lyue in me and I in the. Amen.

¶ Howe a man shall rule hym selfe in
outwarde thynges/and howe he
ought to call to god for helpe
in all perylles and daun
gers. The. xliii.
Chapitre.

Our lordc Iesu sayth to his ser
uaunt thus. Thou oughteste to
take hede dilygently that i euery

place / in euerý dede / and in euerý out-
warde occupacion that thou dost : thou
be inwardly fre in thy soule and haue the
rule ouer thy selfe and that all thynges
be vnder the as in thy loue: and thou nat
vnder them / but that thou be the lord
and gouernoure ouer thy dedes : nat as
a seruaunte or a bondman but rather ex-
empted as a true Hebrewe: that is to say
As a true christen man goynge in to the
nombze and in to the fredome of the chyl-
dren of god / whiche stande vpon thynges
pýsent / and loke towarde thynges euer
lastyng : and beholde thynges transitory
with theyr lefte eye : and thynges euer-
lastyng with theyr ryght eye / whome
worldly goodes can nat drawe downe to
the loue of them / but they rather drawe
worldly goodes to serue : in suche wyse
as they be ordeyned to of god / & as they
be instytuted to do by the hygh maker of
all thynges whiche leueth nothyng inor-
dinate in his creatures. Also if thou stáde
in euerý aduerture and doute that shall
happen to the: nat to the iugemēt of thy
outwarde apparaunce / but anonc in eue-
ry suche doute thou entrest in to thyne
owne soule by deuout prayer as Moyses

The thyrde boke.

dyd in to the tabernacle to aske counsaile
of god: Thou shalt here anone the an-
swere of our lord which shall instructe
the sufficiently in many thyngs both pre-
sent & for to come. It is red that Moyses
had alway recourse to the tabernacle of
god for doubts and questions to be assey-
led and that he there asked the helpe of
god throughe deuoute prayer for the pe-
rylles and daungers aswell of hym selfe
as of the people. So shuldest thou entre
i to the secreete tabernacle of thyne owne
herte/and there aske inwardly with good
denocion the helpe of god in all suche dou-
tes and perylles. we rede that Josue and
the chyldren of Israell were deceyued of
the Sabaonites bycause they gyue light
credence to theyr saynges and dyd nat
fyrste aske counsaile of god as they shulde
haue done/and so by the fayre wordes of
the Sabaonites and throughe a false pitte
Josue and the chyldren of Israell were
illuded and greatly deceyued.

**¶ That a man shulde nat be impo-
rtune in his busynes. The.xliii.**

Chapitre.

.. (iii) ..

The thyrde boke. Folio. C. xxi.

MY sone sayth our lordc comytte al-
waye thy cause to me / and I shall
well dyspose it for the whan tyme shall
come / abyde myne ordinaunce and direc-
tyon / and thou shalt fynde thereby greate
profyte and helpe. A O lordc gladly wyl
I comytte all thynges to the: for it is ly-
tell that I can do for my selfe / wolde to
god that I dyd nat cleue to desyres of
worldly thynges / but that I myght al-
way offre my selfe hooly to thy wyl and
pleasure. A My sone so it is good for the
to do: for somtyme a man that trusteth
moche in hym selfe: and in his owne wyl
setteth his mynde moche to bynge a-
bout this thyng or that as he desyret.
But whan he hath attayned that he de-
syret / than he begynneth to fele all o-
therwyse of it than he dyd before / for the
affections and desyres of man be nat al-
waye one / but dyscye a man ofte fro one
thyng to a nother. Therefore it is no
smale thyng a man fully to forsake hym
selfe though it be in ryght lytell & smale
thyngs. For truly the very perfectyon of
man is a paryte denyng and a full forsa-
kyng of hym selfe. And suche a man is
very fre and beloued of god. But the olde

Amptis

P. ii.

The thyrd boke.

aunciet enemy the fende which respyketh
goodnes all that he may. Leaseth nat
longe fro temptacion/but day and nyght
he maketh greuous assautes: to se if he
may catche any vnware pson in to his
snare of disceyte. Therfore wake ye and
pray ye/that ye be nat deceyued by temp-
tacion.

¶ That man hath no goodnes of hym
selfe/and that he may nat ryghtfully
glozify hym selfe in any thyng.

The.xlv. Chapitre.

O Lorde what is man that thou
vouchestsafe to haue mynde on
hym: or what hath he done for
the:that thou wylte visite hym with thy
grace/ and what may he complayne al-
though thou somtyme forsake hym: or
what may I ryghtwysely say thoughe
thou graunte me nat that I aske/ truly
I may well thynke and say thus. I am
nought/ne I haue no goodnes of my self
but in all thinges I am of my selfe all in
sufficient and go to nought and but I be
holpen of the and be inwardly informed
and taught by the: I shalbe all hooly

The thynde boke. Folio. C.xiii.

flouthfull and to all thinge vnprofitable
O lord thou arte alway one / euer shalt
be one / alway good / alway ryghtwysse
and holy / well ryghtwysely and blessedly
disposyng all thyng; after thy wysdome /
but I wretche that alway am more redy
and more prone to euill thā to good / and
nat I alway abydyng in one / for. vii. tymes
be chaunged vpon me. Neuertheles
it shalbe better with me whan it shall
please the to put to thy helppnge hande /
for thou onely arte he that without man
mayst helpe me : and so mayst thou con-
ferme me and stable me in the that myne
herte shal nat so lyghtly be chaunged fro
the / but that it may be hooly fyrred in the
and fynally to rest in the. And verily if I
coude cast away fro me al mānes cōfort
eyther for gettyng of deuocion : or for I
am compelled therto of necessitye for that
I fynde no cōforte in man / than myght
I well truste in thy grace to haue of the
newe visytacions / and newe heuently con-
solacions / but I confesse it for trouthe /
that I am vnworthy to haue any such
consolacions / and I thanke the as ofte
as any good thygne cometh to me for all
that is good cometh of the. I am but

The thyrde boke.

vanite and nought before the / a vncon-
staunte man & a feble / and therefore wher-
of may I ryght wysly gloryfy my selfe or
why shulde I loke to be magnified / truly
baynglory is a perillous schenens : a gre-
uous pestilence and a ryght great vanite
for it draweth a mā fro the true ioy that
he shulde haue in god and roubeth hym
clerely of all heuenly grace. For whan a
man pleaseth hym selfe he displeaseth the
and whan he delyterh in mannes pray-
syng he is depriued fro the true vertues /
for the true stedfast ioy and gladnes is to
ioye in the and nat in hym selfe / in thy
name and nat in his owne vertue ne in
any creature. Therefore thy name be prai-
sed and nat myne / thy werkes be magni-
fied and nat myne / and thy goodnes be
alway blessed : so that nothyng be gyuē
to me of the laude and prayfynge of man.
Thou arte my glory and the ioy of my
herte. In the shall I be glorified and al-
way shall I ioy in the : and in my selfe
nothyng / but in my infyrmytes. Let the
Jewes seke glory amonge the selfe / but
I wyll none seke but that is onely of the
for all mannes glorye / all temporall ho-
noure and all worldly hyghnes to thy

The thyrd boke. Folio. C. xliii.
eternall glory compared is but as foliages
and a great vanite. & O trouthe/o mer-
cy / o blessed Trinite : to the be laude ho-
noure and glory euerlastyngly. Amen.

☞ Howe all temporall honour is to
be dyspyssed. The. xlii.
Chapitre.

Of some take it nat to greue
though thou se other men ho-
noured & exalted & thy selfe dys-
pyssed & set at nought if thou reple vp thy
herte to me in heuen/the dispites of man
in erth shall lytell greue the. O lord we be
here in great darkenes/& some are we de-
ceyued with vanities / but verily if I be-
helde my selfe well I shulde opely se that
there was neuer wroght done to me by any
creature: ne that I haue nothing wherof
I may right wysly cōplayne. But for as-
moche as I haue ofte synned and gre-
uously offended agaynste the. Therfore
all creatures be armed agaynste me. To
me therfore is due confusion and dispite/
to the laude / honoure / and glory. And
but I can brynge my selfe to this point
that I wolde gladly be dyspyssed & forsake

The thyrde boke .

of all creatures and utterly to seme as
nought in the worlde / I may nat be in-
wardly pacified ne stabled in the/ne spiri-
tually be illumined / nor yet fully be oned
to the.

¶ That our truste is nat to be put in
wordely people. The. xlvii.
Chapitre.

Many if thou set thy peace with
any persone for thyne owne plea-
sure or worldly frendshype/ thou shalt al-
way be vnstable and neuer shalt thou be
contented / but if thou haue alway re-
course to the trouth everlastynge that is
god hym selfe : than the deth or goynge
away of thy derest frende what so euer he
be shall lytell greue the. The loue of thy
frende ought alway to be referred to me/
and for me he is to be beloued howe good
and howe profytable so euer he seme vn-
to the in this lyfe/ without me frendshype
is nought worth ne may nat longe en-
dure / ne that loue is nat true and clene
that is nat knytte by me. Thou oughtest
therfore to be so mortified to all suche af-
fectiōs of worldly men/ that in as moche


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The thynde boke. Folio. L. xv.

as in the is : thou woldest coueyte to be
without all mānes cōforte . So moche a
man nygheth the more to god as he can
withdꝛawe hym self from the world and
from all worldly conforte / & so moche the
more he ascendeth the hygher to god as
he can descende lower in hym selfe / and
as he can were vyle and abiecte in his
owne syght / he that ascribeth any good-
nes to hym selfe apenstandeth the grace
of god and letteth it to lyue in hym / for
the grace of the holy ghost seketh alway
ameke & an hūble herte / if thou couldeste
perfittly noughty thy selfe & hooly auoyde
thy herte fro all create loue / than shulde
I (saith our lord) come to the with great
haboundaunce of my grace . But whan
thou lokest to creatures / than is ryght-
wysly withdꝛawen fro the : the syght of
thy creatoure . Verne therfore to ouer-
come thy selfe for the loue of hym that
made the lyke to him selfe / and thou shalt
anone come to great ghostly knowlege :
howe ytell so euer the thyng be that a
man loueth if he loue it inordynatly / it
hyndꝛeth hym and letteth hym greatly
fro the true and pꝛyte loue that he shulde
haue to god .

The thyrde boke.

☛ That we shuld esche we hayne se-
culer conynge. The. xliiii.
Chapitre.



Mane sayth our lord let nat sayre
and subtyll wordes moue the / for
the kyngdome of heuen standeth nat in
wordes but in good vertuous workes.
Take hede to my wordes for they enflame
the herte and lyghten the vnderstanding
and bynge in also cōpunctiō of herte for
synnes paste and cause also ofte tymes
great heuenly conforste sodeynly to come
in to the soule / rede neuer in any scyence
to the intente thou woldest be called wyse
but study rather to mortify in the all sty-
rynges of synnes asmoche as in the is/
and that shalbe moze profytable in the/
than the knowlege of many harde and
subtyll questions / whā thou hast rest and
vnderstande many doutes / yet neuerthe-
les it behoueth the to come to one that is
begynnynge of all thynges that is god
hym selfe / and els thy knowlege shall ly-
tyll auayle the . I am he that teacheth
a man conynge and gyue moze vnder-
standynge to meke persones / than can

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The thyrde booke. Folio. C. xvi

be taught by mannes teachynge. And
he to whome I speke / shall some be made
wysc: and moche shall be profyte in spi-
rite / whan payne and wo shall be to them
that onely seke for curious lernynge ta-
hynge yttell hede of the waye to serue
god. The tyme shall come whan Christe
lord of Angels: and mayster of al mays-
ters shall appere to here the lesson of eue-
ry creature and to examyne the conscience
of euey persone and than shall Iherusa-
lem that is mannes soule beserched with
lanternes and lyghtnes of goddes hyghe
knowledge and ryghtfull iugementes /
and thā also shall be made open the dedes
and thoughtes of euey man and all ex-
cuses and vayne argumentes shall cease
and vtterly be set aparte. I am he also
that sodeynly at a poynte illumyne and
lyfte vp a meke soule / that it shall be made
able to take and to receyue in shorte tyme
more perfittly the true reason of the wys-
dome of god / than a nother that study-
eth. x. yeres in scoles and lacketh meke-
nes. I teache without sounde of wo-
des / without desyre of oppynions / with-
out desyre of honoure / and withoute
stryfe and argumentes. ¶ And I am

The thynde boke.

he that teacheth all the people to dyspyse
erthly thynges / to loth thynges that be
presente / to seke and to sauoure eternall
thynges / to fle honoures / to bere pacient
ly all euill wordes and spekynge / to put
theyr truste hooly in me / nothyng to co-
uete without me / and aboue all thyng
brennyngly to loue me . And some folkes
through an inwarde loue that they haue
had to me : haue lerned many great thigs
and haue spoken ryght hygh mysteryes
of my godheed . They profyte more in
forsakynge all thyng / than in studyenge
for hygh & subtyll lernynge . But to some
men I speke comen thynges / to some spe-
ciall thynges / to some I appere swetely
in sygnes & fygyures / and to some I gyue
great vnderstandynge of scripture & open
to them hygh secreete mysteries . There is
in booke one voyce and one lettre that is
red / but it enformeth nat all persones a-
lyke / for I am within secretly hyd in the
lettre / the teacher of trouthe the sercher of
manes herte / the knower of thought / the
promoter of good warkes and the rewar-
der of all men after as my wysdome and
goodnes iudgeth them to haue deserued
and none otherwyle.

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The thyꝛde boke. Folio. C. vii.

¶ That we shulde nat regarde moche
outwarde thynges: ne pondꝛe but
lytell the iugement of man.

The. clix. Chapitre.

Muche it is profytable to the to be
ygnoraunte in many thynges and
to thynke thy selfe as deed to the world:
and to whome all the worlde is crucified.
And thou must also as with a dese care
let many thynges passe as thou neyther
herde them ne sawe them/and to thynke
on suche thynges as shall cause in the an
inwarde peace in soule. It is also more
profitable to the that thou tourne the eye
of thy soule fro thyngs that displease the
and to let euery man holde his opinyon
therin as hym semeth best/ rather than
to stryue againe with frowarde wordes.
And truly if thou were well stabled in
god and beheldest well his iugementes/
thou shuldest lyghtly be content to be iu-
ged of other and to be overcome of other
as our lorde Jesu was for the in tyme of
his passion. ¶ O lorde syth it is true that
thou sayste what shall become of vs that
hede so moche worldly thynges & bewepe
so greatly a lytell temporall losse/and we

The thyrde boke.

laboure & renne for worldly profyte with
all our myght / but our spirituall profyte
and the helth of our owne soules we ly-
tell regarde. Suche thynges as lytell or
nothyng profyterh vs is moche set by/
but that : that is most necessary to vs is
enough forgotten / for why all men renne
gladly to outwarde thynges. And truely
but they shortly tourne backe agayne:
they shall gladly rest styll in them / which
in the ende shalbe to them greate peryl
and daunger.

¶ That mē be nat alway to be beloued
for that they so lyghtly offende in
wordes. The. i. Chapitre.

IDd sende me helpe in my trou-
bles / for mannes helpe is ly-
tell worth / howe ofte haue I
nat founde frendshype where I thought
I shulde haue founde it. And howe ofte
haue I founde it where I lest presumed
to haue founde it / where it is a wayne
thyng to truste in man / for the true and
sothfast truste and helth of rightwylse mē
is onely in the. Blessed be thou lord that
fore in all thynges that happeneth vnto

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The thyrde booke. Folio. Lxxviii.

vs / for we be weyke and vnstable : sone
deceyued / and sone chaiged fro one thig
to a nother / who may so warely and so
assuredly kepe hym selfe in euery thyng
that he ne shall somtyme fall in to some
deceyte or in to some perplexite / truely
very fewe : but he that trusteth in the
and that seketh the with a cleue herte /
sydeth nat so lyghtly fro the . And if it
happen hym to fall in to any trouble or
perplexite what so euer it be / and howe
greuous so euer it be he shall anone cy-
ther be helyered by the : or be confortyd
by the / for thou neuer forsakeste hym
that trusteth in the . It is ryght harde
to fynde so true and so faythfull a frende
that wyl perseuer with his frende in all
his troubles / but thou lorde arte mooste
faythfull in all thynges and lyke to the
none can be founde . ¶ O howe well sa-
uoured that holy soule in ghostly thyng-
es that sayd thus . My mynde is sta-
blysshed in god and is fully grounde in
Christe . Truely if it were so with me
the brede of man shulde nat so lyghtly en-
tre in to me ne other mennes wordes
shulde nat so sone moue me / who maye
force all thynges / or who maye peneite all

The thyrde boke.

eupls that are to come/and if thinge for-
sene do yet ofte tymes great hurte/what
shall thā tho thynges do that be nat for-
sene. But why haue nat I wete the better
sene to my selfe/and why haue I so light-
ly beleued other mēnes sayngs/ truly for
we be men & that but frail men though
we be esteemed and thought of many to
be as angels in our cōuersacion/whome
may I beleue but onely the. Thou arte
the trouth that deceyuest no man: nor
mayst nat be deceyued. And on the other
syde euery man is a lyer wepke and vnsta-
ble/and spydyng most especially in wor-
des / so that vnethes it may be beleued
that semeth openly to be true/howe pru-
dently therfore hast thou warned vs to
beware of the lyghtnes of man:and that
our familer seruauntes may be our ene-
my so that it is nat to be beleued though
one wyll say so here is thy frēde/or there
is thy frēde/for I am taught with myne
owne herte: but wolde to god it myght
be as a warnyng to me & nat to my moze
folp. Some say to me beware/ beware/
kepe close to thy selfe that I shall shewe
to the. And whan I speke it close and be-
leued it to be secrete: he can nat be secrete

in that hym selfe despyred but anon he be
trayeth both hym selfe and me/and goth
his way fro suche tales and fro suche vn-
stable men / lord defende me/that I fall
nat in to theyr handes : ne that I neuce
compte any suche thinges. A true worde
and a stable lord gyue in to my mouth/
and a deceptfull tonge dyspue farre away
fro me : for that I wolde nat haue done
to my selfe/ I ought to beware that I do
it that to none other. O howe good and
howe peacefull is it to kepe seplence of o-
ther mennes wordes and dedes and nat to
gyue full credence tyll the trowth be tried
and nat to reporte lyghtly to other all
that we here or se : For to open our herte
fully but to very fewe / and to seke the all
waye that arte the beholder of mannes
herte / and nat to be moued with euery
flake of wordes / but to desyre in herte
that all thynges in vs inwardly and out-
wardly may be fulfilled after thy wyll/
howe sure a thyng is it also for the ke-
pyng of heuenly grace/to fle the conuer-
sacion of wordly people all that we may
and nat to desyre thynges that seme out-
wardly to be pleasaunte and lykynge.
But with all the study of our hert to seke

The thyrde boke.
Suche thynges as bynge in seruoure of
spirite and amendement of lyfe. It hath
ben truly a great hurte to many psons
a vertue knowen and ouer tymely pray-
sed/and on the contrary wyse it hath ben
ryght profytable to some : a grace kepte
in seclence and nat lyghtly reported to
other in this trayle lyfe that is full of tēp-
tacion and preyng enuye.

That we shall put all our confidence
in god whan euill wordes be spo-
ken to vs. The.ii.

Chapitre.

Mane sone sayth our lord / stande
stodgly & truste faithfully i me/
what be wordes but wynd / they
fle i the ayre but they hurte neuer a stone
on the grounde and if thou knowe thy self
nat gyltye / thynke that thou wylt suffre
gladly such wordes for god. It is but a
lytell thyng for the to suffre somtyme a
hasty word sith thou arte yet stable to suf-
fre harde strokes But why is it that so ly-
tell a thyng goeth so nygh thy hert / but
that thou arte yet fleshely and carnall &
hedeest to please men more than thou shul

dest. And bycause thou dyedest to be dispi
sed/thou wylt nat gladly be reproved for
thyne offenses/and thou serchest therfore
busily & with great study how thou maist
be excused. But beholde thy selfe wel and
thou shalt se that the world yet lyueth in
the & a bayne loue also to please mā. whā
thou refusest to be rebuked and punished
for thy defautes / it appereth euydently
that thou art nat yet sothfastly meke / ne
that thou arte nat yet deed to the worlde
nor the worlde to the net truly crucified.
But here my wordes and thou shalt nat
nede to care for the wordes of ten thousand
men. Lo if all thynges were sayd agaynst
the that myght be most malyciously and
vntuly sayned agaynst the / what shulde
they hurte if thou suffered them to ouer
passe and go away : truly no more than
a strawe vnder thy fote / and one heare
of thy hed they myght nat take fro the.
But he that hath nat a mannes herte
withinforth : ne setteth nat god before
the eye of his soule / is sone moued with
a sharpe worde / whan he that trusteth
in me / and wylt nat stande to his owne
ingementc/shalbe free fro all mānes dyce
for I am the Iuge that knoweth all

The thyrde boke.

secretes. I knowe howe every thyng is
done and I knowe also both hym that
doth the wrong and hym that it is done
to. Of me this thyng is wrought and
by my sufferaunce it is come aboute that
the thoughtes of mennes hertes may be
known/and whan the time cometh I
shall iuge both the innocent & hym that
is gilty. But fyrste throughe my ryght-
wylse examinacyon I wyl proue the both
The wytnes of mā ofte tymes decepueth
but my iugemēte is alway true and shall
nat be subuerted/and how be it: it is som
tyme hyd and nat known but to fewe/
yet it is euer true and erreth nat / ne it
may nat erre / thoughe in the syght of
some vnwylse persones it semeth nat so.
Therefore in every doute it behoueth to
renne to me and nat to leaue moche to
thyne owne reason/ but with every thing
that I shall sende the to be contente/ for a
ryghtwylse man is neuer troubled with
any thyng that I shall suffre to fall vn-
to him. In so moche that though a thing
were vntruely spoken agaynste hym / he
shulde nat moche care for it. For he shulde
nat moche ioy though he were somtyme
reasonably excused / for he thynketh al-

The thyȝde boke. Folio .C.xxi.

Way that I am he that scrcheth mannes
herte/and that I iuge nat after the out-
warde apparaunce/for ofte tymes it shal
be founde in my syght worthy to be bla-
med that in mānes syght semeth moche
worthy to be praysed. O lord god moſte
ryghtwyſe Iuge ſtronge and paciente/
whiche knoweſt the fraylte and the ma-
lyce of man/be thou my ſtrength and my
hole conſorte in all neceſſytes / for myne
owne conſcience lord ſuſtyneth me nat/
for thou knoweſt in me that I knowe
nat. And therfor i every reproſe I ought
alway to meken my ſelfe and paciently
to ſuffre all thynges in charite after thy
pleaſure : for gyue me lord as ofte as I
haue nat ſo done / and gyue me grace of
greater ſufferaunce in tyme to come. Thy
mercy is moze proſpytable and moze ſure
waye for me to the gettyng of pardon
and forgiuenes of my ſynnes thā a truſte
in myne owne warkes throughe defence
of my derke conſcience. And thoughe I
dred nat my conſcience / yet I may nat
therfore iuſtify my ſelfe : for thy mercy
remoued and taken away : no man may
be iuſtified ne appere ryghtwyſe in thy
ſyght.

The thyrd boke.

Howe all greuous thynges in this
lyfe are glad to be suffered for wyng-
nyng of this lyfe that is to come.
The. lii. Chapitre.

Mane sayth our lord be nat bro-
ken by impacience with the labour
that thou hast taken for my sake / ne suf-
fer thou nat tribulacions to caste the in
dispayre nor in to vntreasonable heynnes
ne anguysshe in no wyse / but be thou con-
forted and strenghted in euerie chaunce by
my promyses and behests / for I am able
and of power to rewarde the and other
my seruautes haboundauntly more tha-
pe can thynke or desyre / thou shalt nat
laboure longe here ne alwaye be greued
with heynnes / tary a whyle my promy-
ses and thou shalt shortly se an ende of all
thy troubles / one howre shall come whan
all thy laboures and troubles shall cease
and truely that howre wyll shortly come
for al is shorte that passeth with tyme .
Do therefore as thou doste / laboure bus-
sely and saythfully in my byneparde and
I shall shortly be thy rewarde / wyte/
rede / synge / mourne / bestyll and praye

The thyrde booke. Folio. Lxxii.
and suffre gladly aduersyte/for the king-
dome of heuen is more worth than all
these thynges / and moche more gretter
thynges than they are : peace shall come
one day that it is knowe to me and that
shall nat be the day of this lyfe / but a day
euerlastyng with infynite clerenes stada-
faste peace / & syker rest without endyng
And than thou shalt nat say / who shal de-
liuere me fro the body of this deth ne thou
shalt nat nede to cry. wo is to me that my
commynge is the kyngdome of heuen is
thus prolonged. For deth shal tha be dis-
troyed & helth shalbe without ende of bo-
dy and of soule / in so moche that no ma-
ner of burcstfulnes shalbe / but blessed ioy
and most swetnest & most fayrest cōpany.
¶ If thou sawest the euerlasting crownes
of my sayntes in heuen / in howe great ioy
and glozy they are that sōtyme seemed to
be vyle persons & as me dyspylable in the
worlde / thou shuldeste anone meken thy
self lowe to the grounde / and thou shuldest
rather couepte to be subiecte to all men /
than to haue soueraynte ouer any one p-
sone / and thou shuldest nat desyre to haue
myth & solace in this worlde / but rather
tribulation and payne / and thou shuldest

The thyrde boke.

than accompte it as a great wynnynge/
to be dispised and to be taken as nought
amonge the people. O if these thynges
sauoure well to the and depely perced in
to thy herte / thou shuldest nat ones dare
complayne for no maner of trouble that
shulde befall vnto the. Are nat all payn-
full thynges and most greuous laboures
gladly to be suffered for the ioyes cuerla-
styng: verily: for it is no lytell thyng
to wyne or lese the kyngdome of heuen
lyft vp thy face therfore in the heuen and
beholde howe I and all my sayntes that
be with me in heuen: had in this worlde
great batayle and conflycte / and nowe
they ioye with me and be confortd in me
and be sure to abyde with me / & to dwell
with me in the kyngdome of my father
without endynge. Amen.

¶ Of the daye of eternite and of the
myseryes of this lyfe. The.
lii. Chapitre.

O Blessed mansyon of the heuely
cite O mosse clearest day of eter-
nite: whome the night may nat
darken / but the hygh trouth that god is

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The thyrde boke. Folio. C. xliii.

illumine eth and clere eth: the daye alwaye
mery/alwaye syker / & neuer chaunge
his state in to the contrary/wolde to god
that this day myght ones appere & shyne
vpon vs/and that these tēporall thynges
were at an ende. This blessed day shyneth
to sayntes in heuen with euerlastyng
bryghtnes and clere ty/but to vs pylgrymes
in erth it shyneth nat but a farre of/
as throughe a myrroure or glasse. The
heuenly citezēs knowe well howe ioyous
this day is. But we outlawes: the chyldren
of Eue wepe and wayle the bytter-
nes and tediousnes of this day that is of
this presente lyfe shorte and euyl full of
sorowes anguyshes / where man is ofte
tymes defouled with synne: encombred
with passyons / inquieted with dredes/
bounden with charges / busyed with vanities
blinded with errours/ouercharged
with laboures / vexed with temptacions
ouercome with delytes and pleasures of
the worlde: and greuously tormēted som-
tyme with penury and nede. ¶ Whan
shall the ende come of all these miseries/
and whan shall I be clerely deliuered fro
the bondage of synne: whan shall I only
lord be haue mynde on the & fully be made

The thyrde boke.

glade and mery in the / whan shall I be
fre without lettynge and be in parfyte ly-
berty without greue of body and of soule
whā shall I haue sad peace without trou-
ble / peace within and without & on euery
syde stedfast and syker. O lord Iesu whā
shall I stande and beholde the & haue full
syght & contemplacion of thy glozy / and
whan shalt thou be to me all in all / and
whā shall I be with the in thy kingdome
that thou hast ordeyned to thy electe peo-
ple fro the begynnynge. I am leste here
poore and as an outlawe in the lande of
myne enemyes / where dayly be batayles
and great misfortunes. Comforte my exile
aswage my sorow / for all my desyre cry-
eth to the / it is to me a gteuous burden
what so euer the worlde offereth me here
to my solace. I desyre to haue iwarde frui-
cion in the / but I can nat atteyne therto
I coueyte to cleue fast to heuently things
but temporall thynges and passions vn-
mортиfied: pul me alway downwarde in
mynde I wold be aboue all tēporall thin-
ges: but whether I wyll or nat I am cō-
pelled through myne owne defaute to be
subiecte vnto my fleshe / thus I moste
wretched man syght in my selfe and am

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The thynde boke Folio. L. xxiiii.

made greuous to my selfe/whyles my sp
rite despyeth to be bpwarde & my selfe he
downwarde. O what suffre I inwardly
whan in my mynde I beholde heuently
thynges: and a great myltitude of car
nall thought; entre in to my soule. Ther
fore lorde be nat longe fro me ne departe
nat in thy wrath fro me thy scruaunte.
Sende to me the lightnes of thy grace &
bryke downe in me all eternall thought;
Sende forth the darty of thy loue & bryke
therwith all fantasies of the enemy. Ga
ther my wytnes and powers of my soule
to gether in the. Make me forgette all
worldly thynges/and graunte me to cast
awaye and hooly to dyspyse all fantasies
of synne / helpe me thou euerlastyng
truth that no worldly vanyte here after
haue power in me. Come also thou he
uently swetnes and let all bytternes of
synne fle farre fro me / pardon me and
mercifully forgyue me whan I thynke
in my prayer of any thyng but of the/
for I cōfesse for trowth that in tyme past
I haue bled my selfe very vnstably ther
in / for many tymes I am nat there
where I stande or sytte / but rather I
am there where my thoughtes lede me/

The thyrde boke.

for there I am where my thought is and
there as my thought is accustomed to be
there is that that I loue / and that ofte
tymes cometh in to my mynde that by
custome pleaseth me best / and that moste
delyteth me to thynke vpon. wherfore
thou that arte euerlastynge trouth sayste
openly / there as thy treasure is: there is
thy herte. wherfore if I loue heuen: I
speke gladly of heuenly thynges / and of
suche thynges as be of god and that per-
teyne moste to his honoure and to the
glozifyenge of and worthypynyng of his
holy name. And if I loue the worlde: I
ioy anon at worldly felicitye and sorowe
anon at his aduersite / if I loue the flesshe
I ymagyne ofte tymes that pleaseth the
flesshe / and if I loue my soule I delyte
moche to speke and to here of thynges
that be to my soule helthe. And so what
so euer I loue: of them I gladly here and
speke / and here the ymages of them ofte
in my mynde / blessed is that man that
for the lord forgetteth all creatures and
lerneth truly to ouercome hym selfe and
with the seruoure of spirite crucifieth his
flesshe / so that in a clene and in a pure co-
science he may offre his prayers to the:

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The thyrde booke. Folio. C. xxb.
and be worthy to haue company of blessed
Angels. All erthly thynges excluded
fro hym and fully set aparte. Amen.

¶ Of the desyre of euerlastyng lyfe and
of the great rewarde that is promysed
to them that strongly fyght
agaynst synne. The. liii.
Chapitre.

Mane whan thou felest that a
desyre of euerlastyng blyss is
gyuen vnto the & that thou co
uetist to go out of the tabernacle of thy
mortall body / that thou myght clerely
without shadowe beholde my clerenes.
Open thine herte & with all the desyre of
thy soule take that holy ispiraciō: & geue
most large thanks to the hygh goodnes
of god that so worthely doth to the/so be
nyngly vysyteth the/so brennyngly sty
reth the / and so myghtely bretheth the vp
that throug thyne owden bouen thou
fall nat downe to erthly lypnynges / and
thynke nat that that desyre cometh of
thy selfe or of thyne owne werkynge/but
rather that it cometh of the gyfte of
grace and of a louely beholdyng of god

The thyrd booke.

Upon the/that thou shuldest profyte ther
by in mekenes and vertue/and that thou
shuldest also spare the to be redy against
a nother tyme for batayles that are to
come/and the more surely to cleue to god
with all the desyre & affection of thy herte
and to study with all thy power howe
thou mayst most purely & most deuoutly
serue hym / and take hede of this comon
prouerbe. The fyre doth ofte brenne/but
the flame doth nat assende without some
smoke. So in lyke wyse the desyre of some
men draweth to heuently thyngs/and yet
they be nat all free fro the smoke of car-
nall affectiōs/and therfore they do it nat
alway purely for the honour & loue of
god that they aske so desyrously of hym.
Suche oft tymes is thy desire that thou
shewest to be so importune for that desire
is nat cleue & perfyte that is myrte with
thyne owne comodite. Aske therfore nat
that is delectable & profytable to the/but
that is acceptable & honour to me/for if
thou do well and iuge a ryght:thou shalt
preferre my ordynauce & my wyll before
all thy desyres & before all thynges that
may be desyred besyde me. I knowe well
thy desyre. Thou woldest now be in the

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The thyrde boke. Folio .Lxxvi.

lyberty of the glory of the sonnes of god:
nowe the euerlastyng house and the he-
uenly countrey full of ioye and glory des-
lyteth the moche: but that tyme cometh
nat yet: for there is yet a nother tyme to
come / that is to say: a tyme of labour
and of proufe / thou desyrest to be fulfilled
with the hyghe goodnes in heuen but
thou mayst nat yet come therto. I am
the full rewarde of man / abyde me tyll
I shall come and thou shalt haue me to
thy rewarde. Thou arte yet to be proued
here vpon erth and more thoroughly to be
assayed in many thynges / some conforte
shalbe gauen the: but the fulnes therof
shall nat yet be graunted. Be thou there-
fore comforted in me and be thou stronge
as well in doyng as in sufferynge thynges
contrary to thy wyll. It behoueth
the to be clothed in my blode / and to be
chaunged in to a newe man / and thou
must oft tymes do that thou woldest nat
do / and that thou woldest do thou muste
forsake & leue vndone. That shall please
other shall go well forwarde & that shall
please the shall haue no speede / that other
may say shall be wel herde / & that thou shalt
say shall be set at nought. Other shall aske

The thyrde boke.

and haue theyr askynge / thou shalt aske
and be denyed. Other shall be greate and
haue great laude and prayse of the peo-
ple / and of the no worde shall be spoken.
To other this offyce or that shall be com-
mytted and thou shalt be iuged vnprofy-
table in euery thyng / for these thynges
and other lyke : nature wyll murmur &
grudge / and thou shalt haue a great ba-
tayle in thyselfe if thou bere them secrete
in thy herte without complaynyng and
myslaynge. Neuertheles in suche thynges
and other lyke my faythfull seruauntys are
wonte to be proued / howe they can deny
them selfe and howe they can in all thynges
bryke theyr owne wylls / and there
is nothyng that thou shalt nede so moche
to ouercome thy selfe in / as to lerne to be
contented nat. to be set any pryce by in
the worlde / and to suffre suche thynges
as be most contrary to thy wyll especially
whan suche thynges as in thy syght seme
vnprofytable be comanded to be done.
But my sone consyder well the profyte
fruite of al these laboures the shorte ende
and the great rewarde : and than thou
shalt fele no greue ne payne in all thy la-
boures / but the moste sweetest coforte of

The thyrde booke. Folio. C. xxviii.

the holy ghost throughe thy good wyll/
and for that lytel wyl that thou forsakeſt
here thou ſhalt alway haue thy wyll in
heue where thou ſhalt haue all that thou
canſt or mayſte deſyre. There ſhalt thou
haue full poſſeſſion of all goodnes with-
out drede to leſe it. There thy wyl ſhalbe
euer one with my wyll & it ſhall coueyte
no ſtraunge nor pryuate thynges. There
no man ſhall reſyſte the/no man ſhall co-
playne on the/no man ſhal let the/noz no
man ſhall withſtande the / but all thyngs
that thou caſte deſyre ſhalbe there preſent
and ſhal fulfyl all the powers of thy ſoule
vnto the full. There ſhall I yelde glory
for reprobous/and a palle of laude for the
heynes / and for the loweſte place here/
a ſete in heuen for euer. There ſhall apere
the frute of obedience: the labour of pe-
nauce ſhall ioye/and the humble ſubiec-
tion ſhalbe crowned gloriously: bowe the
therefore mekely now vnder euery man-
nes hande and force ytell who ſaith this
or who commaundeth this be done.

But with al thy ſtudy take hede that whe-
ther thy ſlate or thy ſelow or any other
lower than thou aſke any thinge of the
or wyl any thyng to be done by the: that

Impta,

R. i.

The thyrde boke.

thou take it alwaye to the beste & with
a glad wyll study to fulfyll it/let this mā
seke this thyng and a nother that / and
let this man ioy in this thyng and an o-
ther in that what so it be and let them be
lauded and prayesed a thousande tymes/
but ioye thou neyther in this thyng nor
in that/but onely in thyne owne contēpt
and dyspysynge / and in my wyll to be
fulfilled and whether it be by lyfe or deth
that I maye alwaye be lauded & honou-
red in the and by the. Amen.

¶ Howe a man that is desolate ought
to suffre hym selfe hooly to god.

The. lb. Chapitre

Iorde holy father be thou blest
sed now and euer / for as thou
wylt so it is done / & that thou
dost is alwaye well: let me thy poozeste
seruaunte and moste vnworthy ioy in the
and nat in my selfe ne in nothyng els be
syde the/for thou lorde arte my gladnes:
thou arte my hope/my crowne / my ioy &
all my honoure. what hath thy seruaunt
but that he hath of the and that without
his deserte: all thyngs be thyne that thou
hast gauen and made. And I am pooze

The thyrde booke . . . Folio. C. xxiij.
and haue bene in trouble and in payne e-
uer fro my poth: and my soule hath ben
in great heuynes with wepynges & teares
and somtyme it hath bene troubled in it
selfe throughe manyfolde passyons that
come of the worlde & of the flesshe. where
fore lord I desyre that I maye haue of
the / the ioye of inwarde peace: and I
aske the reste of thy chosen chyldren that
be fedde and norysshed of the i the lyghte
of heuently conforctes / but withoute thy
helps I can nat come therto. If thou
lord gyue peace or if thou gyue inwarde
ioye / my soule shalbe anone full of heuely
melody and be deuoute and seruēt in thy
laudes and praysynge / but if thou wilt
drawe thy selfe from me as thou haste sō
tyme done / than maye nat thy seruaunte
renne the waye of thy commaundemen-
tes as he dyd fynde / but than he is com-
pelled to bowe his knees and to kysse
his brest / for it is nat with him as it was
before whā the laterne of thy ghosly pre-
sence shone vpon his hedde / & that he was
defended vnder the shadowe of thy mercy
from all perylles & daungers. O ryght
wyse father euer to be praysed / the tyme
is come that thou wilt thy seruaunte be

Amyta.

Al.

The thyrde boke.

proved. And ryght wysely is it done that
I that now suffre somwhat for the/now
is the houre come that thou haste knowe
fro the begynnynge: that thy seruaunt for
a tyme shuld outwardly be set at nought
and inwardly to lyue to the: and that he
shulde a lytell be dyspysed in the syght of
the worlde and be broken with passyons
& sicknes/that he myght astet ryse with
the in to a newe lyght & be clarified and
made glorious in the kyngdome of heuē.
¶ O holy father thou hast ordeyned it so
to be/and it is done as thou haste comā
ded/this is thy grace to thy frende/to suf
fre and to be tronbled in this worlde for
thy loue/how ofte so euer it be/& of what
persone so euer it be and in what maner
so euer thou suffre it to fal vnto him with
out thy counsaile and prouidence ne with
out cause no thyng is done vpon erthe.
¶ O it is good to me lord that thou haste
mekened me that I may therby lerne to
knowe thy ryghtwys iugementes & put
fro me all maner of presumption & hygh
nes of herte/ and it is very profytable to
me that confusion hath couered my face/
that I may lerne therby to seeke for helpe
and socoure to the rather than to man.

The thynde boke . folio. C. xxi.

And I haue therby lerned to drede thy se-
crete & terribile iugementes which scour-
gesthe the ryght wyse mā with the synner
but nat without equity & iustice. I yelde
thākes to the that thou haste nat spared
my synnes/ but haste punysshed me with
scourges of loue/ and haste sente me sor-
wes and anguyshes within & without/
so that there is no creature vnder heuen
that may conforste me: but thou lord god
the heuently leche of mannes soule which
crypste and helpst and bryngeste a man
nyghe vnto bodily dethe and after reco-
reste hym to halth agayne that he maye
therby lerne to knowe the lytelnes of his
owne power and the more fully to truste
in the. Thy dyscyplene is fallen vpon me
and thy rode of correccyon hath taughte
me/ and vnder that rode I hooly submyt
me / stryke my backe and my bones as it
shall please the and make me to bowe my
croked wyll vnto thy wyll / make me a
meke and a hūble dyscyppe as thou haste
somtime done wth me/ that I may walk
all after thy wyll. To the I comytte my
selfe & all myne to be corrected/ for better
it is to be corrected by the here/ than in ty-
me to come. Thou knoweste all thynges



and nothynge is hyd fro the that is in
mannes conscience. Thou knowest thyn
ges to come before they fall / and it is nat
needfull that any mā teache the or warne
the of any thynge that is done vpon the
erth. Thou knowest what is spedfull for
me and howe moche tribulacion helpeth
to pouрге the ruste of synne i me / do with
me after thy pleasure / and bysdayne nat
my synfull lyfe to none so well knowe as
it is to the. Graunt me lord that to know
that is necessary to be known / that to
loue that is to be loued that to praise that
hyghly pleaseth the: that to regarde that
appereth precious i thy syght & that to re
fuse that is vile before the. Suffre me nat
to iuge after my outwarde wyttes / ne to
gyue sentence after the hearynge of vncō
nyng men / but in a true iugemēt to des
cerne thynges bysible and vnyssible / and
aboue all thynges alwaye to serche and
folowe they wyll and pleasure. The out
warde wyttes of men be ofte decepued in
theyr iugementes. And in lyke wyse the
louers of the worlde be decepued through
louynge onely of visibill thyngs / what is
a man the better / for he is taken better /
truely nothynge / for a deceptfull man is



The thyde boke. Folio .C.xxx.
deceyeth an other/a bayne man deceyeth
an other / and a blynde and a feble crea-
ture deceyeth a nother whā he exalteth
hym / rather cōfōdeth hym than pray-
seth hym/for why / howe moche so euer a
mā be in syght of god/so moche he is and
no moze (sayth the meke saynt frānces)
howe hooly and how vertous so euer he
be taken in syght of the people.

☞ That is good that a man gyue hym
selfe to meke bodely laboures/whā
he seieth nat hym selfe dysposed
to hyghe warkes of deuocion

The. lvi. Chapitre.

M I sone/thou mayste nat allway
stande in the hyghe seruent de-
sire of vertue ne in the hyghest
degre of contemplacion : but thou muste
of necessity through the corrupcyō of the
fynte synne somtyme dyscende to lower
thyng/and agaynste thy wll and with
great tedyousnes to bere the burden of
this corruptyble body/for as lōg as thou
berest this body of deth/thou must nedes
fele some grefe of herte / and thou shalt
ofte tymes bewppe and mourne the bur-

The thynde boke.

den of thy flesshely sclynges and the contradiction of thy body to thy soule / for thou maiste nat for the corruption thereof perscuer in spirituall studyes and in heuēly cōtemplacion as thou woldest do/ and thā it is good to the to fle to meke doctely labours and to exerceyse thy selfe in good outwarde warkes : & in a stedfaste hope & truiste to abyde my cōming and my newe heuēly visitacions / & to bere thy cryle & the byrnes of thy herte paciētly/tyll thou shalt be visited by me agayne/and be deliuered fro all tediousnes and vnyquyetnes of mynde/whan I shall come/I shall make the forgete all thy former laboures / & to haue inwarde reste & quietnes of soule. I shal also lay befor the the floristhig me Dowr of holy scripture/ & thou shalt with great gladnes of herte in a newe blessed sclynge fele the very true vnderstanding therof/and thou shalt than ren quychely the waye of my commaundementes/and than shalt thou saye in great spirituall gladnes. The passions of this worlde be nat worthy of them selfe to byrnye vs to the ioy that shalbe shewed vs in the blisse of heuen. To the whiche blisse byrnye vs out lordē Iesus. Amen.

The thyrde booke. Folio. C. cxxi.

That a man shall nat thynke hym
selfe worthy to haue conforste / but
rather to haue sorowe & payne
and the profyte of the con
tricion. The. lviij.

Chapitre.

Iord I am nat worthy to haue
thy consolacion/ne any spiritu
al visitacion/and therfore thou
doste ryght wysely to me whan thou le-
uest me neddy and desolate / for though I
myght wepe water of teares lyke to the
see. yet were I nat worthy to haue thy
consolacion / for I am nothyng worthy
to haue but sorowe and paine / for I haue
so greuously and so ofte offended the / and
in so many thynges greatly trespassed a-
gaynste the. Therfore I maye well saye
& confesse for trouthe that I am nat wor-
thy to haue thy lesse consolacion. But
thou lorde benygne and mercyfull that
wylte nat thy workes do perisse / to shewe
the greatnes of thy goodnes in the vessel-
les of thy mercy aboue all my merites or
deserte / bouchesaute somtyme to conforste
thy seruaunt more than I can thynke or
deuyse. The consolacions be nat lyke to

The thyrde boke.

menneſſes ſables / for they be in them ſelfe
ſothfaſte and true / but what haue I done
lorde that thou wylt vouchſaue to giue
me any heuenly conſolacion. I know nat
that I haue done any thyng well as I
ſhulde haue done: but that I haue alway
bene prone and redy to ſynne and ſlowe
to amendement / this is true & I can nat
denye it: for if I wolde denye it thou ſhuldeſt
ſtāde agaynſt me / & no mā myght
defende me. what haue I than deſerued
but hell & euerlaſtyng ſyre. I confeſſe for
trouth that I am worthy in this worlde
all ſhame and dyſpyte / and that it becom
meth nat me to be conuerſant with de
uoute people. And though it be greuous
to me for to ſaye thus (yet for the trouth
is ſo) I wyl confeſſe the trouth as it is /
and wyl openly reprocure my ſelfe of my
defaultes that I may the rather obtayne
of thy mercy and forgyuenes / but what
maye I thā ſaye lorde that thus am gyl
ty and full of conſuſion / truly I haue no
mouthe ne tonghe to ſpeke but onely this
worde / I haue ſynned lorde / I haue ſyn
ned: haue mercy on me / forgyue me & vn
knownen me treſpas / ſuffre me a lytel that
I maye wepe & waille my ſynnes of that

I passe hence to the lande of darkenes co-
 uered with the shadowe of dethe. And
 what doste thou lord aske moche of such
 wretched synner but that he be contryte
 and meken hym selfe for his synne/for in
 true contrition and mekenes of herte / is
 foude the very hope of forgiveness of synne
 and the troubled conscience is thereby cle-
 red / and the grace before loste is recou-
 red agayne. Man also is thereby defended
 fro the wrathe to come / & almyghty god
 and the penitente soule mete louyngly to
 gether in holy kyssynges of heuely loue.
 A meke contricion of herte is to the lord
 a ryght acceptable sacrifice / more swete-
 ly sauouryng in thy syght thā brennyng
 censere. It is also the precious opntemēt
 that thou woldest shuld be thēde vpon thy
 blessed fete/for a meke & a contryte herte
 thou neuer dyspysest. This contricion is
 the place of refuge fro the drede & wrathe
 of the enemy/and thereby is washen and
 clensed/what so euer is before mysdone or
 that is defouled throughe synne in any
 maner.

That grace wyll nat be myrte
 With loue of worldly thynges

The. lviij. Chapitre.

The thyrd booke.

O some grace is a precious thig
and wyl nat be myrte with no
private loue nor with wordly
confort. It behoueth the therfore to cast
awaye all lettynge of grace if thou wilt
haue the gracious gyfte therof. Chose
therfore a secreete place & loue to be alone
and kepe the from heryng of bayne tales
and fables / and offre to god deuoute prais
ers and praye hertely that thou mayste
haue a contryte herte and a pure conscy
ence. Thynke all the worlde as nought &
preferre my seruice before all other thyn
ges: for thou mayste nat haue mynde on
me & therewith all delyte the in transitory
pleasures. It behoueth the therfore to
withdrawe the fro thy dearest frendes / &
fro all thyne acquayntaunce / and to se
questre thy minde hooly fro the inordinat
desyre of all wordly confort as moche
as thou mayste. Thus prayde saynt Be
ter that all christen people myght holde
them selfe as straungers and as pylgry
mes vpon erthe / for than they shulde nat
set but lptell pryce by the conforte therof.
O howe sure a truste shal it be to man at
his departynge out of this worlde / so fele
inwardly in his soule that no wordly

loue
tran
But
ned
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And
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sensu
in all
true
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fully
and
the a
hast
teria
loue

The thyrde boke. Folio. C. xxxiii.

loue/ne yet the affection of no passyng or
transpory thinge hathe any rule in him.
But a wepke feble persone newlye tour-
ned to god may nat so lyghtely haue his
herte seuered from earthely lyfynge / nor
the beastely mā knoweth nat the freedde
of a mā that is inwardlye tourned to god.
And therfore if a man wyll perfectly be
spirituall and ghostely: he muste aswel re-
nounce straungers as kynnesfolke & spe-
cially before all other that he be moste
ware of hym selfe / if he ouercome hym selfe
partytly / he shall the soner overcome all
other enemyes. The moste noble and the
moste perfecte victory is: a mā to haue the
victory of hym selfe / he therfore that hold-
eth hym selfe so moche subiecte / that the
sensualitye obeyeth to reason: and reason
in all thynges obeyeth to me / he is the
true overcomer of hym selfe and the lord
of the world. But if thou coueyte to come
to that poynte: thou muste begynne man-
fully / and set thy are to the rote of the tre
and fully to cut awaye and to dystrope in
the al the inordinate inclinaciō that thou
hast to thy selfe or to any priuate or ma-
teriall thyng / for of that byce that a mā
loueth hym selfe inordinate / wel nyghe

The thyrde boke.

dependeth all that ought groundly to be
dystroyed in man / and if that he truly
ouercome / anone shall folowe great tran-
quylite & peace of consyence. But for as
moche as there be but fewe that laboure
to dye to them selfe / ne to ouercome them
selfe perspytely therefore they lye styll in
theyr fleshely scynges and worldly con-
fortes / and may in no wyse ryse vp in spi-
rite aboue the selfe / for it behoueth hym
that wyl be free in herte and haue contem-
placion of me / to mortifie all his euyl in-
clinacyons that he hath to hym selfe and
to the worlde / and nat to be bounde to
any creature by any io:dnate or pruate
loue.

¶ Of the diuersytes and dyces mo-
uynge betwene nature & grace

The. lix. Chapitre.

Many take good hede of the
morsions of nature & grace for
they be very subtyll & moch cō-
trary the one to the other / & hardely may
they be knowen a sondre / but it be by a
ghostely man that throughe spyzituall
grace is inwardely lyghtened in soule.
Euery man desyret some goodnes & pre

The thyrde booke. Folio .Lxxxiii
tenderth somwhat of goodnes in all his
wordes and dedes and therfore vnder pre
sence of goodnes many be deceyued. Na
ture is wply and full of decepte/and dra
weth many to her/whome she ofte tymes
snareth and deceiueth and euer beholdeth
her owne welth as ende of her werke.
But grace walketh simply without deceit
she declyneth fro all euyl/she pretendeth
no gyle but all thynges she doth purely
for god in whome fynally she resteth. Na
ture wyl nat gladly dye: ne gladly be op
pressed ne overcome/ne wyl nat be glad
ly vnder ohter ne be kept in subiectiō but
grace studeth howe she may be mortified
to the worlde/and to the flesh/the resys
teth sensualyte / she seeketh to be subiecte/
she despyeth to be overcome / she wyl nat
vse her owne lyberty/she loueth to be hol
de vnder holy dyscplyne/& coueteth nat
to haue lordshype ouer any one creature
but to lyue and to stande alway vnder the
dyede of god/and for his loue is alway re
dy to bowe her selfe mekely vnder euery
creature. Nature laboureth for her owne
profyte and auantage and moch behol
deth what wyngynge cometh to her by
ohter. But grace beholdeth nat what

The thyrde boke.

is profytable to her selfe/ but what is profytable to many. Nature receyvethe gladly honoure and reuerence/ but grace referreth all honoure and reuerence to god. Nature diredeth reprouynges and dyspyssynges/ but grace ioyeth for the name of god to suffre them both and taketh them whan they come as special gistes of god. Nature loueth ydlenes and fleshely reste but grace can nat be ydle without doyng some good deede/ and therefore seeketh gladly some profytable laboures. Nature despyreth fayre thynges and curious and abhorreth vyle thynges & groce / but grace deuyteth in meke and symple thynges/ she dyspyseth nat harde thynges/ ne refuseth nat to be clad in poore olde clothynge and symple garmetes/ nature beholdeth gladly thynges temporal: she ioyeth at worldly wynnynge/ is heuy for worldly lesynge / and anone is moued with a sharpe worde/ but grace beholdeth thynges euerlastynge and trusteth nat to thynges temporal: nor is nat troubled with the losse of them / ne she is nat greued with a frowarde word for she hath layde a treasure in god and in ghostely thynges whiche may nat peryshe. Nature is couetous &

The thyrd booke. Fo. C. xxxv.
more gladly taketh than gyueth: and lo-
ueth moche to haue pperie and priuate
thynges / but grace is piteous and libe-
rall to the poore / the flesh synguler pros-
fyte / she is contentie with lytell & iudgeth
it more blessed to gyue than to take. Na-
ture inclyneth to the loue of creatures /
to the loue of the flesh and to vanities
and rēnyng aboute and to se newe thin-
ges in the worlde: but grace draweth a
man to the loue of god and to the loue of
vertues: she renounceth all creatures /
the flesh the worlde / she hateth despyres
of the flesh / restraineth lyberte and wan-
dryng aboute / and escheweth asmoche
as she may to be sene amonge recourse of
people. Nature hath gladly some out-
warde solace wherein she may felcably de-
syght in her outwarde wyttes / but grace
seketh onely to be rōforted in god and to
depyte her in his goodnes aboue all thin-
ges. Nature doth all thynges for her
owne wyunnyng and synguler profyte /
she maye do nothyng for fre: but hopeth al-
way to haue lyke profyte or better: or laude
or fauoure of the people / and coueyteth
moche that her dedes & workes be greatly
pondred and praysed / but grace seketh

Impta.

S. i.

no

The thyrde boke.

no tempozall thyng ne none other re-
warde for her hye but onely god she wyl
no more of tempozall goodnes than shall
nede for the gettyng of the goodes euer-
lastyng and careth nat for the vayne
praise of the world. Nature ioyeth great-
ly in many frendes and kynnessfolkes / and
is glorified moche of a noble place of
byrth and of her noble blode and kynred
she ioyeth with myghty men / she flate-
reth ryche men and as mercy with them
that she thynketh lyke to her in noblenes
of the world / but grace maketh a man
to loue his enemyes she hath no pryde in
worldely frendes / she regardeth nat the no-
blenes of kynne / ne the house of her fa-
ther / but if the more vertue be there / she
sauoureth more the poore than the riche
she hath more cōpassyon of an innocent
than of a myghty man: she ioyeth euer in
trouth and nat in falsehed / and alwaye
cōforteth good men more & more to pite
and growe in vertue & goodnes & to sche-
dayly more hygher gyftes of grace that
they may through good vertuous werks
be made lyke to the sone of god. Nature
cōplayneth anone for wantyng of a right
lytell thyng that she wolde haue: or for a
lytell

The thyrde booke. Ro. C. xxvii.
ytell worldly heuynes / but grace bereth
gladly all nedynes and wantynge of the
worlde. Nature inclyneth all thyngs to
her selfe & to her owne ppyte asmoche as
she may / she argueth for her selfe and stry
ueth & syghteth for her selfe. But grace
rendreth all thyngs to god of whome all
thyngs floweth & spryngeth originally /
she ascribeth no goodnes to her selfe / ne
presumeth nat of her selfe / she stryuet
nat ne preferreth nat her opinion before
other mēnes: but in euery sentence she sub
mytteth her mekely to the eternall wys
dome & iugement of god. Nature coucy
seth to knowe & to here newe secrete thin
ges / she wyll that her workes be shewed
outwardly & wyll haue experience of ma
ny thyngs in the worlde by her outwarde
wyttes / she despyeth also to be knowe and
to do great thynges in the worlde: wher
of laude and praysynge may folowe / but
grace careth nat for any newe thyngs ne
for any curious thynges what so euer
they be: for she knoweth well that all
suche vanytes cometh of the corruption
of synne / and that no newe thyng may
long endure vpon erth / she teacheth also to
restrayne the outwarde witts & to eschew

Impta,

S. ii,

all

The thyrde boke.

all hayne pleasure and outwarde shewig
and mekely keperth secrete thynges that
in the worlde were greatly to be meruay-
led and praised. And in euerp thyng and
in euerp science she seeketh some spirituall
profyte to her selfe / and laude & honoure
to almyghty god / she wyll nat that her
good dedes ne her inwarde deuociō be out-
wardly knowen: but moſte despyeth that
our lord be blessed in all his workes / whi-
che gyueth all thynges frely of his high
excellent charite / this grace is a lyght
supernaturall & a spirituall gyfte of god /
and it is the propre marke and token of
electe people : and an earnest peny of the
euerlastyng lyfe / for it rauyſheth a man
fro loue of erthly thynges to the loue of
heuenly thynges / and of a flesshely lyuer
maketh an heuēly persone / and the more
that nature is oppressed and overcome
the more grace is gyuen / and the soule
throughe newe gracious visitacions is
dayely reformed more and more to the
ymage of god.

**¶ Of the corruption of Nature / and
of the worthynes of grace.**

The .lx. Chapitre.

¶ Our lord

The thyrde boke. Fo. C. xxxviii.

O Lord god whiche hast made me
to thyne ymage and lykenes/
graunte me this grace that thou
hast shewed to me to be so great and so ne-
cessary to the helth of my soule / that I
may ouercome this wretched nature whi-
che draweth me alwaye to synne and to
the lesynge of myne owne soule. I fele in
my fleshe the lawe of synne fyghtynge
strongly agaynst the lawe of my spirite:
whiche ledeth me as a thral or a bond-
man to obey to sensualite in many thyngs
and I may nat resyst the passyons ther-
of / but thy grace do assyste me therein . I
haue therfore great nede of thy grace and
that of the greate haboundaunce of thy
grace: if I shulde ouercome this wretched
nature whiche alway fro my youth hath
bene redy and proue to synne / for after
that nature was viciate and defouled by
the synne of the fyrste man Adam / the
payne therof descended in to al his poste-
rite so that : that nature whiche in the
fyrste creacion was good and ryghtwys
is now taken for synne and for corrup-
tion (so farforth) that the mouyngs that
is now lefte vnto nature draweth man
alway to euill. And that is for this reason
for the

The thyrde boke.

for the lytell strength and mounge to
goodnes that yet remayneth in it is as a
lytell sparck of fyre that is hyd and once
hyde with ashes / that is to say the na-
turall reason of man whiche is all about
hylapped and ouerhyllled with darkenes
of ignoraunce / whiche neuertheles hath
yet power to inge betwixte good & badde
and to shewe the distaunce and the diuer-
site betwixte true and false : howe be it
that through weykenes of it selfe it is nat
able to fulfyll all that it approueth / ne
hath nat syth the fyrste synne of Adam
the full lyght of trooth / ne the swetnes of
affections to god as it had fyrste. Of this
it commeth moste mercyfull lord that in
my inwarde man that is in the reason of
my soule / I deelyte me in thy lawes and
in thy teachynges knowynge that they
are good and ryghtwysse and holy / and
that all synne is euyll and to be fled and
eschewed / and yet in my outwarde man /
that is to saye : in my fleshely felynge I
serue the lawe of synne : whan I obeye
rather to sensuallite than to reason. And
of this it folowethe also / that I will
good / but to perfourme it without thy
grace I may nat for weiknes of my selfe
And

The thyrd booke. Fo. Lxxviii.

And forþe I purpose to do many good
dedes but for grace wanteth that shulde
helpe me / I go backwarde and fayne in
my doynges / I knowe the waye to perfec-
tion / and howe I shulde do I se it euident-
ly / but for I am so oppressed with the he-
uy bourde of this corrupte body of synne
I lye still and ryse nat to perfection. ¶
O lord howe necessary therfore is thy
grace to me : to begynne well / to conty-
nue well / and to ende well : for without
the I may nothyng do that good is . ¶
O heuently grace without whome oure
merytes are nought worth / ne the gyf-
tes of nature no thyng to be pondred /
ne craftes or ryches nothyng to be re-
garded / ne beaute / strength / wytt / ne
eloquence / nothyng maye auayle / come
thou shortly and helpe me . The gyftes
of nature be comen to good men and to
bad / but grace and loue are the gyftes
of electe and chosen people : wherby they
be marked and made able and worthy to
haue the kyngdome of heuen . This
grace is of suche worthynes that neither
the gyfte of prophesy / ne thy workyng
of myracles ne yet the gyfte of conyng &
knowlege may nothyng auayle without
it /

The thyrde boke.

it/ne yet faith/hope ne other vertues be
nat acceptable to the without grace and
charite. O blessed grace that maketh the
poore in spirite/to be ryche in vertue and
hym that in ryche in worldly goodes ma
kest meke and lowe in herte/ come and
descende in to my soule & fulfyll me with
thy ghosly cōfortes that it sayle nat ne
faynt nat for werimes and dyynes of it
selfe. I beseeche the lord that I may finde
grace in thy sight/for thy grace shall suf
fise to me/ though I wante that nature
despyeth/for although I be tempted and
bered with troubles on euery syde: yet I
shal nat nedre to drede whyles thy grace is
with me/for she is my strength/she is my
cōforte/ and she is my counsaile & helpe
she is stronger than all myne enemyes
and wyser than all the wyseste of this
worlde/she is the maystres of troyth/the
teacher i discipline/the lyght of the herte
the cōforte of trouble/ the dyuer awaye
of heuynes/the auoyder of drede/ the nou
risher of deuocion / and the bynnger in of
swete teares and deuoute weppng/ what
am I than without grace / but a drye
stocke to caste awaye. Graunte me ther
fore that thy grace may p̄cuent me and
folowe

The thyrd boke. Fo. C. xxxix
folowe me and that it may make me euer
busy and diligente in good workes vnto
my deth: so mote it be. Amen.

That we ought to forsake our selfe
and to folowe Christe by berynge
of his crosse. The. lxi.

Chapitre.

M I lone as moche as thou canst
go out fro thy selfe & fro thyne
owne wyl/ so moche thou maist
entre in to me/ and as to desyre nothyng
outwardly bryngeth peace inwardly in
to mānes soule / so a man by an inwarde
forsakynge of hym selfe ioyneth hym to
god. I wyll therfore that thou lerne to
haue a persyte forsakynge / and a full re-
sygnyng of thy selfe in to my hand; with
out withsaynge or cōplaynyng/ and that
thou folowe me for I am the way/ I am
the trowth / and I am the lyfe: without
a waye no man maye goo / and without
trowth no man may knowe/ and without
lyfe no man maye lyue. I am the waye
whiche thou oughtest to go / the trowth
whiche thou oughtest to beleue: and the
lyfe whiche thou shalte hope to haue / I
am

The thyrde boke.

am the way that can nat be defouled / the
trouth whiche can nat be deceyued / and
the lyfe that neuer shall haue ende / I am
the way moſte ſtrepght / the trouth moſte
perſyte / and the lyfe moſte ſothfaſt / a bleſ
ſed lyfe / and a lyfe vnmade that made all
thynges / if thou dwell and abyde in my
way / thou ſhalte knowe the trouth / and
trouth ſhall deliuer the and thou ſhalte
come to euerlaſtyng lyfe / if thou wylte
come to that lyfe kepe my comaundemen
tes / if thou wylte knowe the trouth be
leue my teachynges / if thou wylt be per
ſyte: ſell all that thou haſt / if thou wylte
be my diſciple forſake thy ſelfe / if thou
wylte haue the bleſſed lyfe / diſpiſe this
preſent lyfe / if thou wylte be exalted in
heuen: make the here in erth / and if thou
wylt reygne with me here the croſſe with
me / for truly onely the ſeruautes of the
croſſe ſhall fynde the lyfe of bleſſedfulnes
and of euerlaſtyng lyght. O lord Jeſu
for aſmoche as thy waye is narrowe and
ſtrayte / and is alſo moche diſpiſed in the
worlde / gyue me grace to bere gladly the
diſpiſynges of the worlde. There is no
ſeruaunte greater than his lord / ne no
diſciple aboue his maſter / let thy ſer
uaunt

The thyrde boke. Fo. L. xl.

maunte therfore be exercised in thy waies
for therein is the helth and the very per-
fection of lyfe/what so euer I rede or here
besyde that waye / it refresseth me nat
ne delyteth me nat fully. My sonc for as
moche as thou knowest these thynges
and hast red them all/thou shalt be bles-
sed if thou fulfyll them / he that hath my
cōmaundementes and kepeth them/he it
is that loueth me/ and I shall loue hym-
and I shall shewe my selfe vnto hym/and
shall make hym sytte with me i the kyng
dome of my father. Lorde as thou hast
sayd and promysed so be it done to me: I
haue taken the crosse of penaunce of thy
hande: and I shall here it vnto my deth as
thou hast put it to me to do. For the lyfe
of euery good mā is the crosse/ & it is also
the way and leder to Paradise (and now
it is begon it is nat lawfull for me to go
abacke fro it: ne it is nat behoueful for me
to leue it: haue done therefore my welbelo-
ued bretherne/go we forth together Iesu
shalbe with vs for Iesu we haue take this
crosse/for Iesu let vs persouer & he shall
be our helpe that is our guyde & leder. Lo
our kyngc goth before vs that shal fyght
for vs/solowe we hym strongly/drede we
no perylls

The thyrde boke.

no perylls/ but be we redy to dy strongly
with hym in batayle/ that we put no blot
in to our glory : ne mynyſſhe nat our re-
warde by ſlepyng cowardly awaye fro
the croſſe.

☞ That a man ſhall nat be ouermuche
caſte in to heuynes though he hap-
pen to fall in to ſome defaultes

The. lxx. Chapitre.

Muche patience and mekenes in ad-
uerſyte pleaſe me more/ thā moche
conſolacion and deuocion in proſperite/
why arte thou ſo heuy for a lytell worde
ſayd or done agaynſte the : if it had ben
more thou ſhuldeſt nat haue ben moued
therwith/ but let it nowe ouerpaſſe : it is
nat the fyrſte and it ſhall nat be the laſte
if thou lyue longe. Thou arte manfull
ynough as longe as no aduerſite falleth
to the and thou canſt well gyue counſayle
and wel canſt thou cōforte and ſtrengthe
other with thy wordes. But whan aduer-
ſite knocketh at thy dore thou ſayleſt a-
none both of counſayle and ſtrength/ be-
holde well therfore thy great fraylte whi-
che thou haſt dayly experience of in lytel
obiectes

The thynde boke. Fo. L. xli.

abiect. Nevertheless it is for thy ghostly
helth that suche thynges and other lyke
be suffered to come vnto the / purpose thy
selfe in thy herte to do the best that lyeth
in the / and than whan suche tribulaciōs
shall happen to fall vnto the / althoughe
it greue y^e / yet let it nat holly ouerthrow
the ne let it nat longe tary with the. And
at the lesse suffre it patiently althoughe
thou may nat suffre it gladly. Moreover
though thou be loth to here suche thyngs
and that thou fele great indignaciō ther-
at in thy herte / yet thrust thy selfe downe
lowe in thyne owne syght / and suffre no
inordinate worde passe out of thy mouth
wherby any other myght be hurted / and
than all suche indignacion shall be anone
aswaged and soone appeased in the. And
than also that whiche before was taken
to so great heynnes to the / shall anone be
made swete and pleasaunte in thy syght.
For yet lyue I sayth our lord redy to
helpe the and to cōforte the more thā euer
I dyd before / if thou wylte hooly truste
in me and deuoutly call for helpe to me.
Be quiete in herte / prepayre thy selfe yet
to more sufferance. For it is nat all lost
thoughe thou fele thy selfe ofte troubled

The thyrde boke.

or greuously tempted. Thyne thou arte
a man and nat god / a fleshely man and
no angell/howe mayst thou allway stande
in one state of vertue whan that wanted
to angels in heuen and to the fyfte man
in Paradise the whiche stode nat longe/
I am he that reyse vp them that be so-
rowfull to helth and cōforte / and those
that knowe theyr owne vnstabilenes: I
lyfte them vp to be stabled in the syght of
my godheed for euer. Forde blessed be
thy holy worde: It is more sweter to my
mouth then hony combe. what shulde I
do in al my troubles and heynnes if thou
dyddest nat somtyme conforte me with
thy holsome and swete wordes: therefore
it shall nat force what trouble or aduer-
sitye I suffre here for the so that I may in
the ende come to the porte of euerlastyng
helth. Gyue me a good ende and a blessed
passage out of this worlde / haue mynde
on me: my lordc/ my god and directe me
by a straite & a redy way in to thy kyng-
dome: I veseche the. Amen.

¶ That a man shall nat serche the
iugementes of god. The. lxiii.

Chapitre.

xxx

The thyrde booke. Fo. L. xlii.

Mane beware to dispute of hyghe
maters and of the secrete iugemen
tes of god / why this man is so leste and
forsaken of god / and why this man is
taken to so great grace / why also one
man is so morche troubled : and a nother
so greatly auanced. These thyngs ouer
passe all mannes knowlege / ne to serche
goddes iugement: no mānes reason may
suffyce ne yet his disputacion. Therefore
whan the ghostly enemy styeth the to
suche thynges : or if any curious men
aske of the suche questios : answer with
the prophete Dauid: and say thus. Lorde
thou arte ryghtwys and thy iugement
are true and be iustified in them selfe / my
iugementes are to be drede and nat to be
discussed by mānes wytt for they be to mā
nes wytte incōprehensyble / beware also
that thou serche nat / ne reason nat of the
merites of sayntes whiche of the was ho
lyer thā other or whiche of the is higher
in heuē. Suche questions ofte tymes no
rthe great stryfes & vnprowfyttable reaso
nyngs and procede of pryde & baynglory
wherby enuye spryngeth and discencion
that is to say whā one labourer to pser
this saynte & a nother this. And truly a
desyre

The thynde boke.

desyre to knowe suche thyngs rather dis-
pleaseth sayntes than pleaseth the. For
I (sayth our lord) am nat god of discen-
cion and stryfe: but of vnite and peace/
the whiche peace standeth rather in true
mekenes than in exaltynge of them selfe.
Some men be more stryzed to loue this
saite or that: & that with moche greater
affection / but truly that affection is ofte
tymes more rather a māly affection than
a godly: am nat I he that haue made all
saintes (yes truly) and ouer that I haue
gyuen the grace / and I haue gyuen the
glozy. I knowe all theyr merites / I pre-
uented them with the swetnes of my blis-
synges. I knewe my electe and chosen
people before the worlde was made / I
haue chosen them fro the worlde: they
haue nat chose me / I called them by my
grace / I drewe them by my mercy / I led
them through temptacions / I sente the
inwarde cōfortes / I gaue them perseue-
raunce / I crowned theyr patience / I
knowe the fyrste man and the last / I loue
the all with an vnestimable loue. Thus
I am to be praysed in all my saynts / and
aboue all thynges to be blessed & honou-
red in all and in euery of them whome I

haue so gloriously magnified and prede-
synate without any merites in them go-
yng before. Therfore he that dysprayseth
the leest of my sayntes doth no honour to
the greatest / for I haue made bothe the
lesse and the more / and he that dysprays-
seth any of my sayntes he dysprayseth
me and other of my sayntes in the kyng-
dome of heuen / for they be all one / faste-
nyed and knyt together in one sure bode
of perfite charite. They fele all one thing
and they wyl all one thing / and they loue
together all into one thinge / & they loue
me moche more than them selfe or theyr
owne merites / for they be rapte aboue
them selfe and be drawen fro their owne
loue / and hooly be tourned into my loue
in the whiche they reste by eternall fruy-
cion. There is nothing that may tourne
them fro my loue / ne that maye thurst
them downe out of theyr glozy / for they
be full of eternall trouth and byenne in-
wardly in soule with fyre of euerlastyng
charyte that neuer shalbe quenched. Let
all them cesse therfore that be carnal and
bestely & that can nat loue but priuate toy
to serche the state of my blessed sayntes
in heuen / for they put awaye and adde to

Impta.

I.i.

The thynde boke .

they: merptes as they fauour and nat af
ter the pleasure of the ciernall trouthe of
god. In many folkes is great ignoraunce/
but moſte ſpecially in them that haue ſo
lytell lyght of ghofteſly vnderſtandyng:
that they can nat loue any perſone with
a clene loue . Many alſo be moued by a
naturall affection or by a worldly frende
ſhypp to loue this ſaynt or that & as they
imagine earthly thinges ſo they imagin
of heuently thig; /but there is a diſtance inco
perable betwyte thing; whiche imphyte
me imagine by naturall reaſon/ & whiche
men truly illumyned with grace beholde
by heuently cōtemplation. Beware ther
fore my ſone to treate curiouſly of ſuche
thiges/for they paſſe thy knowlege/ and
endeuoure thy ſelfe that thou mayſte be
worthy to be nōbzed with the leſſe ſaynt
that ſhall come to heuen. And if percaſe a
man myght knowe who were holper / or
who ſhulde be taken greater in the kyng
dome of heuen/ what ſhulde that knowe
lege auayle hym/ but if he wolde there by
the more nicke hym ſelfe & the more ryſe
therby into the laude & prayſynge of my
name/ truly nothyng . Therefore he is
moche more acceptable to god that thyn

heth on the greatnes of his synnes / & of
the lytelnes of his vertues) and howe far
he is fro the perfeccion of the lestc saynte
that is in heuen/ than he that argueth of
they: greatnes or of thy: litelnes or bles-
sednes of lyfe forgettynge them selfe. It
is better also with deuout prayers & with
wepyng & teares mekely to pray to sayn-
tes / & to calle to the for helpe / than bayn-
ly to seche for they: perfeccion. They be
very well cōtēted with the ioye that they
haue / if men wolde refraine them selfe fro
suche wayne argumentes. They glorifye
nat them selfe of they: merytes ne they a
scrybe no goodnes to the selfe / but they re-
ferre all goodnes to me / for they knowe
well that I of my infinite goodnes & cha-
rite haue gyuen al vnto the. And they be
so moche fulfyllled with loue of the gods
hede & with ouer passinge ioy that no glo-
ry may want in them / ne no felicity. And
the hygher that they be i heuē the meker
they be in the selfe / & the more nyghe and
the more louynge to me. Therefore it is
wryten i the Apocalips / that saynt: in he-
uen leyde they: crownes before god & fell
prostrate on they: face before the meke
lambe that is Iesu and they worshipped

The thyrde boke.

hym as they: lord god that is and shall
be luyng euermore without endyng
Amen. Many scrche who is hygher in
heuen that knowe nat whether they shal
be worthy to be nombred with the lesse
that shall come thither for it is a grete
thyng to be the lesse in heuen/where all
be great for all that shall come thither/
shalbe called the sones of god/ and so shal
they be in dede/ the lesse there shalbe cou-
ted for a. M. & a synner of a. C. yere shal
be set at nought. whā the apostles asked
amonge them selfe who shuld be greatest
in the kyngdome of heuen. They herd
this answer of Christ/ but ye sayd he be
couerted fro your synne & be made meke
as lytell chyldren/ye may nat entre in to
the kyngdome of heuen. He therfore that
maketh hym selfe as this lytell chyld/ he
shalbe greatest in the kyngdome of heuē.
wo than be to the that disdayne to meke
them selfe with lytell chyldren: for the
meke yate of heuen wyll nat suffre them
to entre into it/ wo also be vnto the ryche
proude men that haue they: consolacion
here. For whan the good poore men shal
entre into the kyngdome of god/they shall
stande wepyng and waylyng without.

The thynde booke.

fo. C. xlv.

ioue ye than ye that be meke and poore
in spirite/for yowres is the kyngedome of
god/so that ye walke and holde your iour
ney assuredly in the waye of trouthe.

☞ That all our hope and truste is
to be put in god onely. The

lxiii. Chappter.

O Lorde what is the truste that I
haue in thys lyfe / or what is my
moost solace of all thynges vn-
der heuen. Is it nat thou my lorde god
whose mercy is without measure/ where
hathe it bene well with me without the/
or whan hathe it nat bene well with me
thou beynge present/ I had leuer be poore
with the than ryche without the / I had
leauer be with the as a pylgryme in thys
worlde than without the to be in heuen
for where thou arte there is heuen / and
where thou arte nat/there is bothe dethe
and hell. Thou arte to me all that I de-
syre/and therfore it behoueth me to sighe
to the/to crye for the/and hartely to pray
to the/ I haue nothyng to truste in that
may helpe me in my necessytes but onely
the/for thou arte my hope/ thou arte my

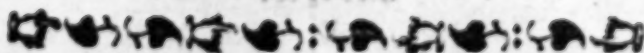
The thynde boke.

truste/thou arte my conforste/ & thou arte
 my mooste faythfull helper in euey nede/
 man seketh that is his / but thou sekeste
 my helthe and profyte / and tourneste all
 thyng into the beste for me / for if thou
 sende temptacions and other aduersites
 thou ordeyneest all to my profyte for thou
 arte wone by a thousande wayes to pro-
 ue thy chosen people. In whyche profe
 thou arte no lesse to be lauded and pray-
 sed: thā if thou haddest fulfilled the with
 heuently conforstes. In the lorde therfore
 I put my trust: and in the I bere paciēt
 ly all my aduersites/for I fynde nothing
 without the but vustablenes and foly/for
 I se well that the multytude of worldly
 frendes profiteth nat:ne that stronge hel-
 pers nothyng may auayle/ne wylse coun-
 sayler gyue profitable counsayle: ne coun-
 nyng of doctours gyue esolacion/ne ry-
 ches delpyer i tyme of nede/ne secrete pla-
 ce any thyng defende/if thou lorde do nat/
 assyke/helpe/conforste/counsayle/ infor me
 and defende/for all thynges that seme to
 be ordeyned to mānes solace i this worlde
 if thou be absent/be ryght nought worth
 ne may nat bryng to man any true fel-
 cyte/thou arte the ende lorde of all good

The thyrde boke. fo. L. xlii.

thynges/the hyghnes of lyfe and the pro-
founde wysdome of all thyng that is in
heuen and in erthe / wherfore to truste in
the aboue all thynges/is the greatest con-
forte to all thy seruauntes. To the ther-
fore I lyfte myne eyn/and in the only I
put my trust/my lord my god the fathre
of mercy/blesse thou and halow thou my
soule with thy heuently blessinges / that
it maye be thy dwellinge place and the
sete of thy eternal glozy/so that nothyng
be founde in me at any tyme that may of-
fende the eye of the maieste / beholde me
lorde after the greatnes of thy goodnes/
and of thy manyfolde mercyes/ and gra-
ciouly here the prayer of me thy poorest
seruaunt/outlawed and farre cryed into
the countre of shadowe of deth/ defende &
kepe me amonge the manyfolde perpylles
and daungers of this corruptyble lyfe / &
dyrecte me through thy grace by the way
of peace into the countre of euerlastyng
clerences without endyng. Amen.

¶ Finis.



CHere after foloweth the fourth
 boke of the folowynge of Chyſte
 whiche treateth moſte ſpecy-
 ally of the ſacramente
 of the aulter .

Prologus.



Come to me (ſayth
 our lord) al ye that
 labour and be char-
 ged / & I ſhall gyne
 vnto you reſeccion
 And the brede that
 I ſhall gyue vnto
 you ſhalbe my fleſ-
 ſhe for the lyfe of
 the worlde . Take it & cate it for it is my
 body that for you ſhalbe gyuen in ſacrifi-
 ce / do ye this in remembraunce of me / for
 who ſo eateth my fleſſhe and drynketh
 my blode he ſhal dwell in me and
 I in hym / theſe wordes
 that I haue ſayd to
 you be ſpyrte
 and lyfe.



The fourth booke. Fo. C. xliiij.
with howe great reuerence Chryſte
is to be receyued. The fyrſt
Chappter.



My lord Iesu Chriſt
eternall trouthe: theſe
wordes aforeſayde be
thy wordes / all be it
they were nat ſayd in
one ſelfe tyme nor
wrytten in one ſelfe
place. And for that
they be thy wordes / I
wyl thankfully & ſaythfully accept theſe
they be thy wordes and thou haſte ſpo-
ken them / and they be nowe myne alſo /
for thou haſt ſayd them for my helthe / I
wyl gladly receyue theſe of thy mouthe to
the ende they maye be the better ſowen
and planted in myne herte thy wordes of
ſo great pyte full of ſwetneſſe and loue
greatly excypte me. But lord my ſynnes
ſere me greatly / and my conſcience nat
pure to receyue ſo greate a myſterye /
draweth me ſore abacke. The ſwetneſſe of
thy wordes prouoketh me / but the multitude
of myne offences charge me very ſore.
Thou commaundeſt that I ſhall come vnto

The fourth boke .

the saythfully if I wyll haue parte with
the and receyue the nozysyng of immor-
talyte. And coueyte to optayne the glory
and lyfe eternall. Thou sayest lorde/come
ye to me that labour and be charged/
and I shall refreshe you . O howe swete
and howe ampyable a worde is it in the
care of a synner that thou lorde god wyll
byd me that am so poore and nedy to the
communion of thy moste holy body. But
what am I lorde that I dare presume to
come to the . No heuen and erthe maye
nat comprehend the / and thou sayeste
cōe ye all to me/what meaneth this most
mcke worthynes/ & this louely & frendely
byddyng / howe shall I dare come to the
whiche knowe nat that I haue done any
thyng well/howe shall I byrnyng the into
myne house whiche so ofte haue offended
before thy face. Angels & archangels ho-
noure the/ & right wise men drede the/and
thou sayest yet come ye all vnto me / but
that thou lorde haddest said it/who wolde
beleue it to be true. But thou haste comā-
ded it/who durst attēpt to go vnto it. For
that iuste mā laboured an hōdred yere to
make the shype to the ende he might be sa-
ued with a fewe of his people/ howe may

The fourth booke. Fo. C. lxxiii.

I prepare me than i an houre to receyue the with due reuerence that arte maker & creatoure of all the worlde. Moyses thy seruāt & great familiar & speciall frende made the arke of tymber nat corruptible whiche he couered with ryght pure golde & put in it the tables of the lawe/ & I a corrupte creature / howe shall I so lyghtly dare receyue the that arte maker of the lawe & gyuer of grace & lyfe vnto al creatures. The wyse Salamon king of Israel edified a meruaylous tēple to the pray synge of thy name i the space of. vii. yerz & by. viii. days halowed the feast of the dedication of the same/ he offered a thousand peassible hostes & put the arke of god i the place made redy for it with great melody of clarions & trumpettes. Howe dare I thā that am moste poore amōg other creatures receyue the i to my house / which scarcely haue well spent one houre of tyme or one halfe houre of my lyfe. & O my lord howe moche studyed they to please the/ & how lytel is it that I do/ how lytell tyme take I whan I dispose me to be houseled seldome am I gathered together in the / & more seldome am I purged fro hauing my mynde ouermoeche on worldly thyngs

The fourth boke .

and certaynly no vnprofitable thought
ought to come into thy holy pſence of thy
godhede / nor no creatures ought there to
haue place / for I ſhall nat receyue an An
gell but the lord of Angels into myne
herte. Foruertheles there is a great diffe
rence bytwene the arke of god with hys
relykes & thy moſte pure & pſecious body
with his vertues / whiche are more than
can be ſpoken / & bytwene the ſacrifyce of
the olde lawe / that was but a ſygure of
the newe lawe / & the true hoſte of thy pre
cious body that is the accompliſhment of
all the olde ſacrifyce / why than am I nat
more enflamed to come to the / why do I
nat prepare my ſelfe with greater dyl
gence to receyue this holy & bleſſed ſacra
ment ſyth the holy auncient fathers the pa
triarkes & prophetes / kynges & prynces with
all the people haue ſhewed ſo great affec
tion towarde thy ſeruite in tyme paſſed.
¶ The moſte deuoute & bleſſed kyng the
kyng Dauid went before the arke of god
& honoured it with al his ſtrength alway
remembryng the great benefytes befo
re gūe vnto the fathers / he made orgāns of
diuers maners & alſo pſalmes which be
ordayned to be ſonge / & he hym ſelfe ſong

the with great gladnes / and ofte tymes
with his harpe he beig fulfilled with the
grace of the holy ghoſt taught the people
of Iſraell to laude & prayſe god with all
they: herte / & dayly with they: mouth to
blyſſe him & pryche his goodnes . And if
there were ſhewed thā ſo great deuotion &
remembraunce of laude & prayſyng to god be
fore the Arke of the olde teſtament / howe
moche reuerēce & deuotion ought we thā
nowe to haue i the pſence of his holy ſa-
cramēt & in the receyuyng of the moſt ex-
cellēt body of our lord Jeſu Chryſt ma-
ny rēne to dyuers places to viſite relykes
of ſayntes & meruayle greatly whā they
here of they: blyſſed dedes . They ſe great
buyldyngs of tēples / & beholde howe there
bones & holy reſpōs be couered with ſylk
& lapped in golde . And lo thou my lord
god thou arte preſente here with me i the
aulter / the moſt holy ſaynt of ſayntes ma-
ker of al thynges & lord of Angels . Ofte
tymes there is great curioſite & vanite in
the ſyght of al ſuche thyngs / & lytell frute
& amēdemēt is had thereby & that ſpecially
where there is ſo lyght recourſe & waue-
rynge without any contricyon goyng be-
fore . But thou my lord god my lord Je-

The fourth booke.

In Chyrist god & mā arte here hole present
in the sacrament of the auiler/ where the
frute of euerlastyng helth is had plentu
ously as ofte as thou arte worthely & de
uoutly receyued. But if that shall be done
fruytfully/ there may be no lyghtnes/ cu
ryously/ nor sensualite/ but stedfast fayth
deuoute hope/ and pure charite. ¶ God
luisible maker of al the worlde howe mer
uaylously doest thou with vs/ howe swe
tely & howe graciously dysposest thou all
thynges to thy chosen people / to whome
thou offerest thy selfe to be taken in thys
glorious sacramēt. Certainly it surmounteth
all vnderstandyng & it dyaweth the
vertes & kyndelet the affection of all de
uoute mē. The true faythfull people that
dispose all thyr lyfe to amendement: re
ceyue ofte tymes through thys glourious
sacramēt great grace & deuotion & great
loue of vertue. ¶ A meruaylous & secrety
ly hydde is the grace of this sacramēt the
whiche the faythfull people of Chyrist do
only knowe/ for infideles & they that lyue
in synne may haue therof no maner of ex
perieñce. In this sacramēt spiritual grace
is gyuen / & the vertue that was loste in
theyr soule is repayred/ & the beaute that

was
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they
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& nee
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de/for
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was defourmed through sine retourne
agayne / & the grace of this sacramēt som
tyme is so moche that of the fulnes of de-
uotion that cometh therby / nat onely the
mynde but also the feble bodyes recouer
theyr former strength . But verey it is
greatly to be sorowed that we be so slowe
& negligēt / & that we be styred with no
more affection to receyue Christ than we
be / for in hym standeth all mercyte & hope
of them that shalbe saued / he is our helth
& our redemption / he is the cōfortour of
all that lyue in this worlde / and the eter-
nall reste of sayntes in heuen . And it is al
so greatly to be sorowed that so many
take so lytell hede of this hyghe mystery
whiche gladeth the heuen & preseructh al
the worlde . Alas the blyndnes & hardnes
of mannes herte that taketh no greater
hede to so noble a gyfte / but by the dayly
vllig therof is negligēt & taketh lytel hede
thereto / yf this blessed sacrament were my-
nistred only i one place & cōsecrate by one
pcest in the worlde / with howe great de-
syre thinkest thou the people wolde renne
to that place & to y^e pcest that they might
se there these heuenly mysteryes . Nowe
there be many pcests & crist is offred i many

The fourth boke

places that the grace and loue of god to mā may appere so moch the more as the holy cōmunion is spzed the more abroad throughout the worlde/ thāking be to the therfore my lordē Iesu that thou vouchē saufe to refreshe vs poore outlawes with thy p̄cious blod & to styre vs with the word of thy own mouth to receyue this holy mesterp/sayng cōe ye all to me that labour & be charged & I shal refreshe you.

¶ That the great goodnes and charyte of god is gyuen to man in this blessed sacrament. The. ii. Chappter.

O my lordē Iesu trustyng i thy great goodnes & mercy I come to the as a sycke man to hym that shal heale him: and as he that is hongry & thursty to the fountayne of lyfe/that is neddy to the kyng of heuen as a seruaūt to his lordē / a creature to his creatoure/ & as a desolate person to his meke and blessed confortoure. But howe is it that thou comest to me / who am I that thou wilt gyue thy selfe vnto me/howe dare I a sinner appere before the/& howe is it that thou wilt vouchsafe to come to so simple a creature/ thou knowest thy seruaūt & seest well that he hath no goodys of hi self wherby thou

shuldest gyue this grace vnto hym / I cō-
fesse therefore myne owne vnworthynesse
and I knolege thy goodnes I prayse thy
pyte and yelde the thankynge for thy
great charyte. Merely thou doest all thys
for thyne owne goodnes and nat for my
merytes that thy goodnes may thereby
the more appere & thy charyte the more
largely shewed: and thy mekenesse the
more hyghly be cōmended. Therefore by
cause this please the and thou hast cō-
maunded that it shulde thus be done: thy
goodnes also therein please me / and
wolde to god that myne iniquite resysted
it nat. O my lord Iesu howe great re-
uerence and thankynge with perpetual
praysnges of thy name ought to be gy-
uen the for the receyving of thy holy bo-
dy whose dignite no man is able to ex-
presse. But what shall I thynke in thys
communion and in goynge to my lord
god whome I can nat worshyppe as I
ought to do / and yet I desyre to receyue
hym deuoutly. But what may I thynke
better or more helthful to me than hooly
to meke my selfe before the / exalting thy
infinite goodnes farre aboue me. I laude
the my lord god and shal exalte the euer.

Amta.

W. C.

112 The fourth boke.

lastyngh. I dyspyse my selfe / and sub-
myte me to the and sorowe greatly the
dependes of myne inquite. Thou arte the
saint of all saintes and I am the fylth of
all synners / and yet thou inclyneste thy
selfe to me that am nat worthye to loke
towards the. Thou comdest to me / thou
wylt be with me. Thou byddest me to thy
feaste / thou wylte gyue me this heuently
meate & this angels fode to eate whyche
is playnly none other but thy selfe that
arte the lyncly breade whiche descendest
fro heuen & gyuest lyfe to the worlde / be-
hold lord fro whens all this loue pcedeth
and how great goodnes shyneth vpon vs
& howe great thankes & prayses are due
to the therfore. O howe helthfull & howe
profitable a counsaile was it whan thou or-
daynest this glorious sacrament & howe
swete & howe ioyous a feaste was it whā
thou gauest thy selfe as meate to be eatē.
O lord howe meruaylous is thy werke /
howe mighty is thy vertue / & howe farre
vnspekeable is thy trowth. By thy worde
all thinges were made & al thinges were
done as thou hast comaūded / it is a mer-
uaylous thyng and worthye to be belueued
and farre aboue the vnderstādyng of mā

that thou lord that art god and very man
art hooly cōteyned vnder a lytel lykenes
of breade and wyne and arte eaten with-
out cōsumynge of hym that taketh the /
& that thou that arte lord of all thynges
and that nedest nothyng in this worlde
woldest by this glorious sacramēt dwell
in vs / kepe thou myne hert and my body
immaculate that in a glad & a pure cōscy-
ence I may ofte tymes celebrate thy mys-
teries & receyue the to my euerlastig helth
whiche thou hast ordeyned most specially
to thy honour & perpetuall memory. O
my soule be thou mery & glad for so noble
a gyfte and so synguler a cōforte leste to
the in this vale of misery / for as ofte as
thou remembrest this mystery and takest
the body of Chryst : so ofte thou workest
the worke of thy redempcyon / & art made
partaker of all the mercies of Chryste.
Truely the charite of Chryste is neuer
minished / and the greatnes of his mercy
is neuer consumed : & therfore thou oughtest
alway with a newe renwyng of mynde
to dispose the to it / & with a well aduysed
and a depe cōsideracion to thynke on this
great mystery of helth / it shuld seme to the
as newe & as pleasaunt a ioy & cōfort whā

The fourth boke.

thou singest masse or herest it/as if chryst
the same day fyrst entred into the wombe
of the virgyne and were made man/or if
he the same day suffred & dyed vpon the
crosse for the helthe of mankynde.

¶ That it is very profytable ofte to
be houseled. The thyrd
Chaptyr.

O Lord I come to the : to the ende
that it maye be well with me
throughe thy gyfte / and that I
may ioye at the holy feaste that thou of
thy great goodnes hast made redy for me
In the is all that I may or shall desyre/
for thou arte my helthe and my redemp-
cyon/my hope/ my strength/my honoure
and glory. Make me thy seruaunte thys
day merry and glad in the/ for I haue lyft
my soule vnto the/how I desyre deuoutly
and reuerently to receyue the into myne
house that I may deserue with zachec to
be blessed of the and to be accompaned
amonge the chyldren of Abraham / my
soule coueyteth to receyue thy bodye/my
herte desyreth to be oned with the/betake
thy selfe to me lord and it suffyseth / for

without the there is no cōforte/ ne without the
I may nat be/ ne without thy v^{is}itation I may nat lyue / and therefore it
behoueth me ofte tymes to go to the and
for my helthe to receyue the/ lest haply yf
I shulde be defrauded from that heuently
meate I shulde fayle in the waye. So
thou saydest thy selfe most merciful Iesu
as thou were preachynge to the people /
and heleddest them of theyr sykkenes / I
wyl nat let the retourne into theyr hou-
ses fastynge lest they fayle by the waye /
do with me therfore in lyke maner that
hast lefte thy selfe in this gloriuous sacra-
ment for the cōforte of all faythfull peo-
ple. Thou arte forsake the true refectyon
of the soule/ and he that worthely eateth
the shalbe parte taker and heyre of eter-
nall glozy/ it is necessarie to me that so
ofte do offende/ so sone ware dull & slowe/
that by ofte prayours and confessyons I
may renewe my selfe / puretpe my selfe /
and kyndle my selfe to quyknes and fa-
uoure of spirite/ lest haply by long obste-
ynyng I myght fall fro that holy purpose
for the wyttes of man and woman be fro
theyr pouthe proude and redy to cypill / &
but this heuently medecyne do helpe/ man

The fourth booke.

may anone fall to worse and worse: there-
fore this holy cōmunyon draweth a man
fro cupll and cōforteth him in goodnesse/
if I now be ofte tymes so neclly gent and
flouthful whā I am cōmonde what shuld
I be if I receyued nat that blessed medi-
cyne nor sought nat for that great helpe/
and thoughe I be nat every day apte nor
disposed to receyue my creatoure / neuer-
theles I shall take hede to receyue hym
in tymes conuenient / so that I maye be
parte taker of so great a grace / for it is
one of the most pꝛyncipall cōsolacions to
a faythfull soule : that is to saye / that as
longe as he is as a pylgryme in this mor-
tall body / that he ofte remembre his lord
god and receyue hym that is hys onely
beloued aboue all thynges. It is a mer-
uaylous goodnes of the great pyte that
thou lord hast anenste vs / that thou crea-
tour & gyuer of lyfe to all spiritys vouchest
safe to come to a poore creature / & with
thy godhede and manhode to refreshe his
hungre & nede. O happy is that man and
blessed is that soule that deserveth deuout-
ly to receyue his lord god / and in that re-
ceyuyng to be fulfilled with a spirytual
ioye. O howe great a lord bothe he re-

ceyue
by
lowe
frede
both
thou
other
erth
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it of
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ry of
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O
sweet
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The fourth boke. Fo. C. litiij.

reue/howe well beloued a gess dothe he
hyngge into hys house/howe ioyous a fe-
lowe dothe he receue / howe saythfull a
frede doth he accept/howe noble a spouse
doth he enbrace / that receyue the / for
thou arte onely to be beloued before all
other and about all thynges/ let heuen &
erth and all the ornaments of them be
spyll in thy presenc / for what so euer they
haue worthy laude or prayse / they haue
it of the larges of thy gyfte and yet they
may nat be lyke to the honour and glo-
ry of thy name/of whose wysdome there
is no nombre nor measure.

☞ That many comodities be gyven to
them that deuoutely receue thys
holy sacrament. The. iiii.

Chappter .

..

(:::)

..

O My lorde god preuente thy ser-
uaunte with the blessinges of thy
swetnesse that he maye deserue to go
reuerently and deuoutly to this hyghe sa-
crament/spyre by myne herte into a full
beholdig of the/ & deliuer me fro the great
douth & pcelnes p^t I haue be i time passed

The fourth booke.

visite me in thy goodnes & gyue me grace
to taste inwardly in my soule / the swet-
nes that is hyd secretly in this blessed sa-
crament as in a moost plentuous foun-
tayne. Illumpne also myne eyn to se
and beholde so great a mystery & strengthe
me that I may alway saythfully and vn-
doubtedly beleue it / for it is thy operacyon
and nat the power of man / thy holy in-
stitucion and nat mānes inuencyon. And
therfore to take and to vnderstande these
thinges no man is sufficient of hym selfe
and they also ouerpasse the subtylte of al
angels and heuently spirytes / what maye
I than most vnworthy synner erth and
allthes serche and take of so hygh a secreete
but onely that in symplenes of herte / in
a good stable sayth and by thy commaun-
demente I come to the with meke hope
and reuerēce and beleue verely that thou
arte here present in this sacramente god
and man. Thou wylte therfore that I
shall recepue the and knytte my selfe to
the in perfyte charyte / wherefore I aske
the mercye and desyre that thou gyue me
thy speccall grace that I may fro hense-
forth be fully molten and relented into
the and flowe in thy loue / and neuer after

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wher
refra
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hope
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and p
gyfte
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thou
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tion
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a ned
selfe
cram
wha
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faru
elect

The fourth booke. Fo. C. lb.

to intermytte my selfe with any other cō
forte. This most hygh and most worthy
sacrament is the lyfe of the soule and bo-
dy. The medicine of al spiritual syckenes
wherby all vyces be cured/ passyons be
restrayned / tēptacyons be ouercome and
dymnysshed: the greater grace is sente/
vertue is encreased/ fayth is stablysshed/
hope is strengthened / and charyte is kyn-
deled and spred abroad. Thou hast gyuen
and yet ofte tymes gyuest many greate
gyftes by this sacrament to thy beloued
seruauntes that deuoutly receyue the: for
thou thereby arte the stronge vpholder of
my soule/ the repayrer of all the infyrmy-
ties of man/ and the gyuer of all inwarde
consolacion/ and of cōforte in tribulacion
and fro the depenes of theyr owne delec-
tion thou raysest thē agayne into a strōg
hope of thy preservacion / and renewest
them and lyghtest them inwardly with
a newe grace / so that they that felte thē
selfe before receyvinge of that blessed sa-
cramēt heuy and without affection after
whan they haue receyued it/ haue founde
them selfe chaunged into great ghostely
fauoure / and all this thou doest to thy
electe people of thy great goodnes that

The fourth boke.

they may se and knowe openly by experis-
ence that they haue nothyng of the selfe
but that all grace and goodnes that they
haue / they haue receyued of the : for of
them selfe they be colde dull & vndeuous /
and by the they be made feruente quicke
in spiryte & deuoute folowers of thy wpll
who may go mchely to the fountayne of
swetnes but that he shall brynge awaye
with hym greate plente of swetnesse / or
who may stande by a greate fyre but he
shall fele great heate thereof / & thou lord
arte the fountayne of all swetnesse / and
the fyre alwayes brennyng and neuer
saylyng / and therefore thoughe I maye
nat drawe of the fulnes of that fountayne
ne drynke therof to the full. I shall neuer
thelesse put my mouthe to the hole of the
heuenly pype that I may take some lytel
droppe thereof to refreshe my thurst so
that I be nat all dzyed away / & thoughe
I be nat all heuenly and all brennyng in
charyte as the Seraphyns and Cheru-
byns be / neuerthelesse I shall endeuer me
to set my selfe to deuocyon & to prepayre
myne herte that I may gette some lytell
sparkle of the brennyng of heuenly lyue
though the mche receyuing of this lyuely

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The fourth booke. Fo. L. lvi.

sacrament/and what so euer wanteth in
me I beseeche the my lord Iesu most ho-
ly and blessed that thou benygny & gra-
ciously supply in me: for thou hast vouch-
safed to call all to thy sayeng. Come
pe to me all that labour and be charged
and I shall refresh the you. I labour in
the sweete of my body: and am turmented
with the sorowe of my herte/ I am char-
ged with synnes / trauayled with temp-
tacions intyked & oppressed with many
euill passios/and there is none that may
helpe or that maye delpue me / ne that
may make me saue / but thou lord god
my onely sauyoure/to whome I comytte
me and all myne that thou kepe me and
lede me into lyfe euerlastyng / accepte me
and take me into the laude and glozpe of
thy name that haste ordayned to me thy
body and blode into my meate & drynke/
and graunte me lord I beseeche the that
by the ofte receyuyng of thy highe mys-
tery the feruoure of deuocyon may dayly
encrease in me.

¶ Of the worthynes of the sacramente
of the aulter / and of the state of prest-
hode. The. v. Chappter.

The fourth booke.

If thou haddest the purete of angels/
and the holynes of saynt Iohn Bap-
tyst: thou shuldest nat for that be woꝝ-
thy to receyue ne touche this holy sacra-
mente / for it is nat graunted for the me-
rytes of man that a man shulde cōsecrate
and touche the sacrament of Chryst and
take to his meate the breade of angels / it
is a great mysterpe and it is a great dyg-
nyte of pꝛeestes to whome it is graunted
that is nat graunted to angels / for pꝛe-
stes onely that be ducly ordayned in the
churche haue power to syng masse and
to consecrate the body of Chryste / for a
pꝛeest is the mynyster of god vsyng the
worde of consecracion by the cōmaundes-
ment and ordinaunce of god / and god is
there the pꝛyncipall doer & the myny-
ster / to whome is subiecte all that he
wylleth / and all obeyeth to that he com-
maundeth. Thou oughtest therfore more
to beleue almyghty god in this moost ex-
cellent sacrament / thā thynne owne wytte
oz any other visyble token oz sygne . And
therfore with drede and reuerence it is to
go to this blessed werke. Take hede than
diligently and se fro whens this mystery
and seruyce cometh that is gyuen vnto

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The fourth booke.

Jo. C. lviij.

the by the touchyng of the handes of the
bysshope. Thou arte now made a p[re]est
and arte cōsecrate to syng masse. Take
hede therfore that thou saythfully and de
uoutely offre thy sacryfyce to god in due
tyme/and that thou kepe thy selfe with
out reproche/thou hast nat made thy bou
den more light/but thou arte now bounde
in a strayter bonde of discyplene and of
moche more hyghe perfectyon than thou
wre befoze. A p[re]est oughte to be adour
ned with all vertues: and to gyue other
ex[em]ple of good lyfe / hys conuersacyon
shulde nat be with the cōmon people / ne
in the comon way of the worlde: but with
angels in heuen oꝝ with p[er]fyte men in
erthe that be moſte beste disposed to serue
god. A p[re]est also clothed in holy veste
mentes bereth the place of Chryſte that
he shulde humbly and mekely pray to our
lorde for hym selfe and for all the people
he hath befoze hym and behynde him the
sygne of the crosse of Chryſte / that he
shulde diligently remembre hys passyon/
he beareth befoze hym the crosse that he
may diligently beholde and se the steppes
of Chryſte and study feruently to folowe
them/and behynde hym also he is spgued

The fourth booke.

With the crosse that he shulde gladly and
mekely suffre all aduersities for the loue
of god / he beareth the crosse before hym
that he shulde bewaile his owne synnes /
and he beareth it behynde hym that he
may through copassyon beweepe the syn-
nes of other and knowe hym selfe to be
sette as a meane betwene god and all the
people / and not to ceasse of prayer and ho-
ly oblaciō tyl he may deserue of almygh-
ty god mercy and grace / whan a prest
saythe masse he honoureth god / he ma-
keth angels glad / he edifieth the church
he helpeth the people that be on lyue / a-
ppueth rest to them that be deed / and
maketh hym selfe parte taker of all good
deedes.

¶ Of the inwarde remembraunce and
exercyse that a man ought to haue
afore the receyving of the body
of Christe. The. vi.
Chapitre.

Lorde whan I thynke of thy wor-
thynges; and of my great fylthynges
I tremble strongly and am comforted
in my selfe / for if I receyue the nat

The fourth booke. Fo. C. lviij.

If the eternall lyfe / and yf I vnwoy-
thely receyue the: I rene into thy wrath/
what shall I than do my good lord: my
helper / my protectoure / conforter / and
ryght sure counsaylloure in all my neces-
sities. Teache me good lord the ryghte
waye/and purpose vnto me some redy ex-
ercyse couenable to the receyvinge of
this holy mystery/for it is necessary vnto
me and greatly profytable to knowe
howe deuoutly and reuerently I oughte
to prepare myne herte to receyue it/or to
consecrate so great and so goodly a sa-
crifice as it is.

Of the discussyng of our owne con-
science/and of the purpose of a
mendment. The. vii.

Chappter.

.. (/:/:) ..

I behoueth the aboue all thynges
with soueraygne reuerence
and profounde mekenes of herte
and with full fayth and humble intent
to the honoure of god to celebrate: take
and receyue this holy sacramente / cra-
mpne dply gentely thy conscience by true

The fourth booke.

contrycyon and meke confessyon & make
it cleane after thy power: so that thou
knowe nothyng that greueth or byteth
thy conscience or that maye let the to go
freely vnto it / haue displeasure of all thy
synnes in generall / and for thy dayly ex-
cesses and offences haue syghynges and
sorrowng; more speciall / and if the tyme
wyl suffre it / confesse vnto god in secreete
of thyne herte the miseries of al thy pas-
syons / wepe and sorowe that thou arte
yet so carnall and worldly / so vnmozt-
fied fro thy passions / so full of mooyons
of concupiscences so vnware and so euill
ordered in thy outwarde wyttes / so ofte
mystyked with vayne fantasies / so moche
enclyned to outwarde & to worldly thyn-
ges so neglygent to inwarde thynges / so
reedy to laughynge and dysolucyon / so
harde to weppynge and cōpunction / so re-
dy to easy thynges : and to that that is
lykynge to the fleshe / so slowe to penaunce
and feruoure of spireite / so curious to here
newe thynges and to se fayre thynges / so
loth to meke and abieete thynges / so co-
uetous to haue moche / so scarce to gyue /
so glad to holde / so vnadysced in spekyng
so incontynent to be styll / so euill ordered

in maners/so importune in dedes / so gre-
dy vpon meate/so dese to the worde of god
so quicke to reste / so slowe to labour / so
attēptue to fables so slepy to holy vigels
so hasty to the ende / so vnstable to take
hede to the way to the ende/ so neerly gent
in the scripce of god so bulle and so vnde-
uoute to go to masse/ so dyne in thy how-
sell / so sone fallen at large to outwarde
thynges/so seldome gathered together to
inwarde thynges/ so sone moued to angre
and wrathe/so lyghtly styrrēd to the dys-
pleasure of other/so redy to iuge/so rigo-
rous to reprove/so glad in prosperyte / so
seble in aduersite/so ofte purposynge ma-
ny good thynges: and so seldome byng-
ynge them to effecte. And whā thou haste
thus confessed and beweped all these de-
sautes and suche other lyke in the / with
great sorowe & displeasure of thyne owne
craynes/set the than in a full purpose to
amende thy lyfe / and to profyte alwaye
fro better to better/and than with a full
resigynge and a hole wpll offre thy selfe
into the honoure of my name in the aul-
ter of thy herte as scaryfyce to me: that
is to say/faithfully comyttig to me bothe
thy body and soule/so that thou mayst be

Imptā.

X. i.

The fourth boke.

Worthy to offere to me this hygh sacrifice
and to receyue helthfully the sacramente
of my holy body / for there is no oblation
more worthy nor satisfaccyon greater to
put away synne / than a man to offere hym
selfe purely and hooly to god with the of-
ferynge of the body of Chryste in masse &
in holy comunyon. If a man do that in
hym is and is truly penitente as ofte as
he cometh to me for grace & forgyuenes.
I am the lord that sayth / I will nat the
deeth of a synner but rather that he be con-
uerted and lyue / and I shall no more re-
membere his synnes / but they all shalbe
forgyuen and pardoned vnto hym.

¶ Of the oblation of Chryste in the
crosse / and of a full forsakynge of
our selfe. The. viii.

Chappter.

Our lord Iesu sayeth to hys ser-
uaunte thus. As I hangynge all
naked with myne armes spredde abroad
vpon the crosse / offered my selfe to god
the father for thy synnes so that no-
thing remayned in me but that all wente
in sacrifice to please my father : and to

appease his wrathe anenst mankynde / so
thou oughtest to offre thy selfe frely to
god as moche as thou maist i a pure & ho-
ly oblaciō dayly in the masse with all thy
power & affeccyon. what requyre I more
of the than that thou shuldest study hooly
to resygne thy selfe vnto me / for what so
euer thou gyuest beside thy selfe I regarde
it nat / for I loke nat for thy gyftes: but
for the / for as it shulde nat suffice to the
to haue al thynges besydes me: so it maye
nat please me what so euer thou gyue but
thou gyue thy selfe. Offre thy selfe to me
and gyue thy selfe all for god / and thy ob-
lacyon shalbe acceptable. No I offered
my selfe hooly to my father for the / and
I gaue my body and blode to thy meate /
that I shulde be all hooly thyne and thou
myne / but if thou haue a trust in thy selfe
and doest nat freely offre the to my wyll:
thy oblacion is nat pleasaunte / and there
shall be betwene vs no perspyte ouynge.
Therefore a fre offerynge of thy selfe into
the handes of god must go before all thy
werkcs if thou wyll optayne grace and
the trewe lyberte. Therefore it is that so
fewe be inwardly ylluminate and fre by-
cause they can nat hooly forsake the selfe

The fourth boke.

(for my word; be true) but a man renounce hym selfe he may nat be my disciple/ and therfore if thou couepte to be my discypyle offre thy selfe fully to me with all thyngge affectyon and loue. Amen.

✠ That we ought to offre our selfe and all ours to god: and to pray for all people. The. ix. Chap.

Lorde all thinges be thyne that be in heuen and erth. I desyre to offre my selfe to the in a free and perpetuall oblation/so that I maye perpetually be with the. ✠ Lorde in simplenesse of herte I offre me this daye to the to be thy seruante in the scrupce and sacrifice of laude perpetuall/ accept me with this oblation of thy precious body whiche I this daye offre to the in the presence of thy holy angels that be here presente inuisible that it may be to my helth and to the helthe of all the people/ and lorde I offre to the all my synnes and offences that I haue committed befoze the and thy holy Angells fro the day that I myghte fyrste offende vnto this daye/ that thou vouchesaufe throught thy great charite to put away al

my synnes and to clenſe my conſcience of
all myne offences & reſtore to me agayne
the grace that I through ſynne haue loſt
and that thou forgyue me all thynges
paſte and receyue me mercyfully into a
blessed kyſſyng of peace & of forgyuenes/
what may I do than but mekely confeſſe
and bewaile my ſynnes/ and contynually
aſke mercy of the/ forgyue me mercyfull
lorde nowe I beſeeche the for all my ſynes
diſpleaſe me moche/ and I wyl neuer cō
mytte them agayne but ſorowe for them
redy to do penaunce and ſatiffaccyon after
my power/ forgyue me lorde forgyue me
my ſynnes for thy holy name/ ſaue my
ſoule that thou haſt redeemed with thy pre
cious blode/ I cōmytte my ſelte hooly vñ
to thy mercy/ I reſygne me in to thy han
des do with me after thy goodneſſe/ and
nat after my malice and wretchedneſſe.
I offre alſo to the all my good dedes
though they be very fewe and imparfyte
that thou amende them & ſanctifye them
and make them lykynge and acceptable
to the/ and alway make them better and
better/ and that thou brynge me though
I be a ſlowe and an vnproſpytable perſon
to a blessed and a laudable ende. I offre

The fourth booke.

also to the all the despyres of deuoute persons/the necessyte of myne auncesters / frendes / brother / syster / and of all my louers / & of all them that for thy loue haue done good to me or to any other / and that haue despyred and asked me to praye or to do sacryfyce for them or for theyr frendes whether they be on lyue or dede / that they may the rather fele the helpe of thy grace and the gyfte of thy heuently consolacyon thy protection fro all perylls / and the deliuerance fro all payne / and that they so beyng deliuered fro all euyls maye in spiryтуall gladnesse yelde to the hyghe laude and prayсыnges. I offre to the also my prayer and my peaslyble offerpyng for all them that haue in any thyng hyndered me or made me heuye / or that haue done me any hurte or greue / and for all them also whome I haue at any tyme made heuy / troubled / greued / or sclaundered in wordes or dede wittyngly or ygnorantly: that thou forgyue vs all together our synnes and offence agaynst the / and of cche of vs agaynst other / and that thou lorde take fro our hertes all suspicion and indygnacyon / wrathe / verraunce / and what so euer may let charyte or dimynish

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The fourth booke. Fo. C. lxi.

Be the fraternal loue that eche of vs shuld
haue to other / haue mercy lord haue mer-
cy on all them that aske the mercy / and
gyue grace to the that haue nede & make
vs to stande in suche case that we be wor-
thy to haue thy grace / & finally to come
to the lyfe euerlastyng. Amen.

That the holy communion is nat
lyghtly to be forborne. The
x. Chappter.

.. (::) ..

I behoueth the to renne ofte to
the fountayne of grace and mer-
cy / and to the fountayne of all
goodnes and purety: that thou mayste be
heled fro thy passyons and vyces / and be
made more stronge agaynst all the temp-
tacions and deceptfull craftes of the ene-
mye. The synde knowynge the greatest
seute and hyghest remedy to be in recey-
vyng of this blessed sacrament enforseth
 hym by all the wayes that he can to let &
withdraue all faythfull & deuoute people
fro it as moche as he can / & therfore some
men whā they dispose the selfe to it haue
more greater temptacions than they had

The fourth booke.

before/for as it is wyrtten in Job the wicked spirite cometh amonge the chylidren of god that he may by his olde malyce & wyckednes trouble the or make the ouer moche fearefull and perplered/ so that he may dymynishe theyr affeccyon or take away theyr faythe/ if haply he may thereby make them cyther vtterly to cease from beyngc howseled or els that they go to it with lytell deuocion/ but it is nat any thig to care for all hys craftes and fantasyes howe vyle and vgly so euer they be / but all fātasys are to be throwen agayne at his owne hede / and he so farre to be dyspyssed that for all his assautes and comocions that he can styre vp/ the holy communion be nat omptted / somtyme ouer moche curiousnesse to haue deuocyon/ or ouer great doute of makynge confessyon / letteth moche this holy purpose/ do therefore after the counsaile of wyse men/ and put away all doutfulnes & scripulousnes for they let the grace of god and dystroye hooly the deuocyon of thy mynde. Also it is nat good that for any lytell trouble or grete that thou leaue this holy worke but go lyghtly and be confessed/ and forgyue gladly all that haue offended the. And yf

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The fourth booke.

No. C. lxxiii.

With a great reuerence: and rather to pre-
sente therein the laude & honour of god
than his owne consolacion. For so ofte a
man is houseled mystically and inuysibly
as he remembreth deuoutely the mystery
of the incarnation of Christ & his passion
and is thereby kyndled into his loue / he
that doth nat preparre him selfe for none
other cause but bycause the feast is com-
myng or the custome copelleth him ther-
to / he shall comonly be vnto it / bles-
sed is he therfore that as oft as he sayeth
masse or is houseled offereth him selfe vn-
to our lord in holy sacryfice / be nat in
sayeng masse ouer longe nor ouer shorte /
but kepe the good comon way as they do
that thou lyuest with / for thou oughtest
nat to do that shulde greue other or make
the tedious / but to kepe the comon waye
after the ordynance of the holy fathers / &
rather to confyrme thy selfe to that that
shalbe profitable to other / than to folowe
thyne owne deuocion or priuate pleasure.

That the body of Christe and holy
Scripture are most necessary for the
helthe of mannes soule. The
xi. Chappter.

The fourth booke.

O Most sweeteste Jesu howe great
 sweetnesse is it to a deuoute soule:
 whanne he is fedde with the at thy he-
 uenly feaste: where there is none other
 meate brought forth to cate but thou his
 onely beloued: and that arte moste desy-
 rable to him aboue all the desyres of hys
 herte/and verely it shulde be swete & plea-
 saunte to me/by an inwarde and meke af-
 fection to wepe before the / and with the
 blessed woman Mary Magdalcyne to
 washe thy fete with the teares of myne
 eyn. But where is that deuotion/ where
 is that plentuous shedynge out of holy
 teares. Certaynly all my herte oughte to
 brenne and to wepe for ioy in the sight of
 the and of thy holy Angels/ for I haue
 the verely present with me/though thou
 be hyd vnder another lyknes / for to be-
 holde the in thy propre & diuine clerenes
 myne eyn myght nat bere it nor all the
 worlde myght nat sustayne to se the i the
 clerenes and glozy of thy magesty. Ther-
 fore thou greatly helpest my weykenesse
 in that thou hydest thy selfe vnder thys
 holy sacrament. I haue him verely and
 worshype hym whome angels worshype
 in heuen / but I onely in faythe and they

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In open syght and in thyne owne lyknes
without any couerture / it behoueth me
to be contente in the lyght of true saythe
and therein to walke tyll the day of euer-
lastyng clerenesse shall appere / and that
the shadowe of fygyres shall go awaye
whan that that is perfyte shall come all
use of sacramentes shall cease / for they
that be blessed in the heuently glozpe haue
no nede of this sacramental medycyne: for
they ioye without ende in the presence of
god / beholdinge his glozpe / face to face /
and so transformed fro clerenesse to clere-
nesse of the godhede they taste the glory of
the sone of god made man as he was in
his godhede fro the begynnyng and shall
be euerlastyng / whanne I remembre all
these meruaylous confortes what solace
so euer I haue in this worlde though it
be spirituall it is greuous and tedypous
vnto me / for as longe as I se nat my lorde
openly in his glory I set it at nought all
that I se and here in this worlde . Lorde
thou arte my wytnes that nothyng may
coforte me ne no creature may quiete me
but thou my lorde god whome I desyre
to se and beholde eternally. But that is
nat possyble for me to do as longe as I

The fourth booke

Maſbe in this moſtall lyfe/ wherfore it be
houcheth me to kepe my ſelfe in great pacy
ence and to ſubmytte my ſelfe to the in
euery thyng that I deſyre / for thy holy
ſayntes that nowe ioy with the abode in
good fayth and pacyence all whyles they
lyued here the compynge of thy gloꝛye.
That they beleued I beleue / that they
hoped to haue : I hope to haue / & thyder
as they by thy grace be come : I truſte to
come / and tyll than I ſhal walke in fayth
and take conſorte of the examles of the
ſayd holy ſayntes. I haue alſo holy booke
for my ſolace as a ſpirituall glaſſe to loke
vpon / and aboue all theſe I haue for a
ſynguler remedy thy holy body. I per
ceyue well that two thynges be moche ne
ceſſary vnto me in this worlde / without
whiche this miſerable life ſhulde be to me
as importable / for as long as I ſhall be
in this body : I confeſſe my ſelfe to haue
nede of two thynges / that is to ſaye / of
meate and lyghte. Theſe two haſte thou
gyuen vnto me / that is to ſay. Thy holy
body to the refreſhyng of my body and
ſoule / and thou haſte ſet thy worde as a
lanterne before my ſete to ſhewe me the
way that I ſhall go without theſe two I

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The fourth booke. fo. C. lxxvi.

may nat well lyue / for the worde of god
is the lyght of my soule / and this sacra-
ment is the breade of my lyfe. These two
may also be called the two tables set here
and there in the spirituall treasure of ho-
ly church / the one is the table of the ho-
ly aulter / haupnge this holy breade that
is the precious body of Chryste. The o-
ther is the table of the lawes of god con-
teynnge the holy doctryne of the lawe
of god and instructynge man in the right
saythe and in the true beleue: leadynge
hym into the inwarde secretes that be
called Sancta sanctorum: where the in-
warde secretes of scripture be hyd & con-
teyned. I yelde thākinges to the my lord
Jesu the bryghtnes of the eternall lyght
for this table of holy doctryne / the which
thou haste minystrid to vs by thy scrua-
tes / prophetes / and apostles & other doc-
tours / and thanknges also be to the: the
creatoure and redemer of mankynde that
thou to shewe to all the worlde the great-
nes of thy charyte prepardest a great sou-
per in the which thou settest nat forth the
lambe figured in the olde lawe but thy ho-
ly body & blode to be eatē / gladdig therby
in that holy feast all saythfull people / and

101. 2. 01. The fourth booke

gryunge them to drynke of the chalysse
of helth in the whiche be cōteyned all the
deyhtes of Paradyse / where Angels eate
with vs with moche more plentuous swet-
nes. ¶ O howe greates and howe ho-
nourable is the office of prestes / to whom
is gyven power to cōsecrate with the ho-
ly wordes of consecration the lord of all
magesty / to blesse hym with theyr lippes
to holde hym in theyr handes / to receyue
hym into theyr mouthes / & to mynyster
hym to other. O howe cleene shulde tho
handes be / howe pure a mouth / howe ho-
ly a body / and howe undefouled shulde be
the herte of a prest: to whome so ofte en-
treth the auctorite of all clemences. Truly
there ought to pcede fro the mouth of a
prest that so ofte receyueth the sacramēt
of Chrystes body / no worde but that is
holy / honeste / and profytable / hys eyn
shulde be full symple and chaste that vse
to beholde the body of Chyste / and hys
handes shulde be full pure and lyfte vp in
to heuen / whiche vse to touche the crea-
ture of heuen and erthe / and therefore it
is specially sayd in the lawe to the prestes
Be ye holy for I your lord god am ho-
ly. O god almighty thy grace be with vs

The fourth booke. Fo. C. lxxvi.
O helpe vs that haue receyued the office
of presthode / that we may serue the wor-
thely & deuoutly in all purety & in a good
conscience. And though we may nat lyue
in so great innocencye as we ought to
yet gyue vs grace at the lest that we may
wepe and sorowe the euyls that we haue
done / so that in spirituall mekenes and in
a ful purpose of a good wyll we may serue
the here after. Amen.

¶ That he that shalbe holysed ought
to prepaye hym selfe thereto before
with great diligence. The
xii. Chaptyer.

I Am the loue of all purety / and the ly-
berall gyuer of all holynes. I seke a
clene herte and there is my resting
place make redy for me a great chambre
treawed / that is thyne herte and I with
my disciples shall kepe myne. After with
the / if thou wylte that I shall come to the
and dwell with the / clense the of all the
blde fylth of synne / and clense also the ha-
bitacle of thyne herte / and make it plea-
sant and sayre / exclude the worldlye and all
the clamorous noise of synne / and syt soe.

Amyta.

T. i.

107. The fourth booke.

fitary as a sparowe in an house caryng &
thinke vpon all thy offences with greate
bitternes of herte / for a true louer wyll
prepare to his beloued frende the best and
the sayest place that he can / for in that is
knowne the loue & affection of hym that
receyveth his frende / but neuerthelesse I
knowe that thou mayste nat of thy selfe
suffice to make this / preparynge fully as
it ought to be in euery poynte / though
thou wente about it an holt pere toge-
ther and haddest none other thing in thy
mynde to thinke vpon / but of my merce
& grace only: thou arte suffered to go vnto
my table / as if a poore mā were called to
the dyner of a ryche man / & he had none
other thinge to gyue hym agayne but o-
nely to humble him selfe & thanke hym for
it / do that i the is wth thy best diligence
& do it nat only of custome nor of a neces-
sitye onely for thou arte bounde to it but
with dyde & reuerence & great affectyon
take the body of thy beloued lord god
that so longly boched cause to come vn-
to the. ¶ I am he that hath called the / I
haue comāded that this thinge shulde
be done I shall supply that wanteth i the.
Come therfore & receyue me whā I gyue

The fourth booke. Jo. L. xlviii.

the the grace of deuotion pside thankyn-
ges to me therfore / nat for that thou arte
worthy to haue it / but for that I haue the
wed my mercy lounge to the / & if thou
haue nat grace of deuocyon throughe re-
cepyng of this sacramēt / but that thou
seleste thy selfe more dye and more vnde-
uoute than thou were before / yet cony-
uewe styl in thy prayer / weyle / wepe / and
call for grace / & cease nat tyll thou mayste
recepye some lytel droppe of this helthfull
grace of deuotion. Thou haste nede of me
and nat I of the / ne thou comeste nat to
sanctifie me but I come to sanctifie the &
to make the better than thou were before
Thou comest to be sanctified and be o-
ned to me and that thou mayste recepye
a newe grace and be kyndeled of newe to
amendement / do nat forget this grace but
alwaie with all thy diligence praye
thy herte / & brig thy beloued vnto the & it
behoueth the nat only to praye thy selfe
vnto deuocyon before thou shalt be bound
but that thou also kepe thy selfe therein
diligently after the recepyng of the sa-
crament: and there is no lesse keepyng re-
quypte after than a deuote preparation
Imptio: qd dicitur in Psalmo

The fourth booke.

is nedefull before/for a good keppnge after
is the best sparacyon to receyue newe
grace here after/ & a man shalbe the more
vndisposed thereto yf he anon after he
hath receyued the sacrament / gyue hym
selfe to outwarde solace/beware of moche
spekyng/ abyde in some secreete place and
kepe the with thy lord god/for thou hast
hym that all the worlde maye nat take
from the / I am he to whome thou muste
gyue all / so that fro hens forth thou lyue
nat in thy selfe but onely in me.

¶ That a deuoute soule shulde greatly
desyre with all his herte to be onyed
to Christ in this blessed sacra-
ment. The xiiii Chap.

¶ So shall graunt vnto me lord that
WI may fynde the onely / and open al
myne herte to the and haue the as
myne herte desyret / so that no man may
disceyue me nor no creature moue me nor
drawe me backe but that thou only speke
to me and I to the as a loue is wonte to
speke to his bylond / and a frende with
his beloued frede. That is it that I pray
for / that is it that I desyre / that I maye

The fourth booke. No. C. lxx.

be hooly onyed to the / and that I maye
withd;awe myne hert fro al thinges crea-
ate and thzoughe the holy comunion and
ofte sayenge masse to sauer and taste eter-
nall thinges. Ah lord god whan shall
I be al onyed to the and hooly be molten
in to thy loue / so that I hooly forget my
selfe/be thou in me and I in the/& graunt
that we may so abyde alway together in
one / vercly thou arte my beloued electe &
chosen befoze all other i whome my soule
coueyteth to abyde all dayes of hys lyfe.
Thou arte the lord of peace i whome is
the sufferayne peace & the truc reste/ with-
out whome is labour and sorowe and in-
finite misery: vercly thou art the hyd god
& thy counsaile is nat with wycked peo-
ple/but with meke men & symple in herte
O howe swete and howe benigne is thy
holy spirite whiche to the intēt thou wol-
deste shewe to thy chosen people thy swet-
nes/haste vouchedsaufe to refreshe them
with the moost swete b;ede that dyscens-
deth from heuen. Merely there is none o-
ther nacion so great that hath their gods
des so nyghe vnto the / as thou lord god
arte to all thy faythfull people to whome
for they; dayly solace & to reyse their her-

The fourth booke.
kes into the loue of heuynly thynges/ thou
gyuest thy selfe as meate & drynke. ¶ **Q**
what people be there that be so noble as
the christen people are / or what creature
vnder heuyn is so moche beloued as the
deuoute christen soule into whome god en
treth and fedeth her with his owne glo
rious fleshe and blode. ¶ **O** inestimable
grace / **O** meruaylous worthynes / **O** loue
without measure / synfully she wed vs
to man / but what shall I yelde agayne to
god for all this grace and this hyghe cha
ryte / truly there is nothing that is more
acceptable vnto him than that / I hooly
gyue hym myne herte & inwardely toyne
my selfe vnto him and than shall all myne
inward partes toy in him. Whā my soule
is perfectly oned in to him. Than shall he
say to me if thou wylte be with me I wyl
be with the / and I shall answer to hym
agayne and saye. Whiche cause lord to
abide with me / and I wyl gladly abide
with the / for that is all my desyre that my
herte may be faste knyt vnto the without
departynge. Amen. ¶ **O** the brennyng desyre that some de
uoute persones haue had to the body
of Christ. **The. xiii. Chap.**

O howe great multytude of swer nesse
is it lorde that thou haste hydde for
them that diede the: but what is it than
for them that loue the: verely whanne I
remembze me of many deuoute persones
that haue come to this holy sacramente
with so great feruoure of deuotion I am
than many tymes astonyed & confounded
my selfe that I go vnto thy aulter and to
the table of thy holy cōmunion so coldely
& with so lytel feruour & that I abyde styl
so drye and without any affectyon of hert
and that I am nat so hooly kyndeled be-
fore the my lorde god/ nor so strongly dra-
wen therby in affection to the as many de-
uoute persones haue bene/ the whyche of
the great desyre that they haue hadde to
this holy communion and for a seleable
loue of herte that they haue had thereto
myght nat refrayne them selfe from we-
pyng/ but effectuously with the mouthe
of they: herte and body together opened
their mouthes to the lorde that arte the
lynely fountayne bycause they coulde nat
otherwyle aswage ne tempre they: hun-
ger but that they toke thy holy body whi-
che they dyd with great ioy and spiritual
gredines. Truly the great brenning faith

151. The fourth booke.

of them is a probable argumēt of thy ho-
ly presence / and they also knowe verely
they: lorde in brekynge of breade whose
bertes so strongly brenneth in the by the
presence of they: lorde Jesu sacramental
ly than walkynge with them: but verely
suche affection and deuocyon & so stronge
seruour and loue be ofte tyme farre from
me/be thou therfore moste swete and be-
nigne lorde Jesu mercifull and meke vn-
to me and graunt me thy pooze seruaunt
that I may fele somtyme some lytel part
of the hartly affection of thy loue in thys
holy cōmunion / that my fayth maye the
more recouer and amende / & myne hope
through thy goodnes be the more persyte
and my charite beyng ones perfittly kyn-
deled/and haupnge experyence of the he-
nenly Manna: do neuer fayle. Thy mer-
cy lorde is stronge ynoughe to graunt to
me this grace that I so moche desyre / &
whan the tyme of thy pleasure shall come
heningly to visite me with the spirite of a
brennyng seruour to the/ and thoughbe I
do nat brenne in so great desyre as suche
speciall deuoute persones haue done / yet
neuerthelesse I haue desyre by thy grace
to be inflamed with that brennyng desyre:

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The fourth booke Jo. C. lxxi.

prayng & desyrng that I may be made
parte taker of all suche thy seruēt louers/
& to be nombred into thei holý cōpany.

¶ That the grace of deuotion is gotten
throughe mekenes & forsakynge of our
selfe. The. xv. Chaptyer.

I behoueth the abydyngly to seke
the grace of deuocyon and without
ceasynge to aske it: patiently and sayth-
fully to abyde it: than fully to receyue it/
mekely to kepe it/studiously to work with
it / & hooly to cōmytte to god the tyme &
the maner of hys heuenly visitacyon tyll
his pleasure shalbe to come vnto the/ and
pryncypally thou oughtest to meke the
whan thou sclyste but lytell inwarde de-
uocion/by thou shalte nat be ouermoeche
caste downe therfore nor inordynately be
heuy/for our lord gyueth many tymes in
a shorte moment that he denyed longe
tyme before / he gyueth also somtyme in
the ende / that in the begynnyng of the
prayour he deferred to graunte yf grace
shuld alwayes anone be graunted & shulde
anone be present after the wyll of hym
that asketh it/if shulde nat be well able to
be borne by a weake and feble person / and

The fourth booke.

therfore in a good hope & meke pacyence
the grace of deuocyon is to be abyden and
taryed for / & thou oughtest to arrecte it
to thy selfe & to thyne owne synnes whan
grace is nat gyven the/or that it is secret
ly taken fro the. Somtyme it is but a ly-
tell thinge that letteth grace or hydeth it
awaye/if it may be called lytell and nat
rather great that letteth and prohibiteth
so good a thyng/but whether it be lytell
or great if thou amoue it and perfitely o-
uercome it / it shall be graunted vnto the
that thou desyrest/and forthwith as thou
betakest thy selfe with all thyne herte to
god and desyrest neyther this thyng nor
that for thyne owne pleasure / but hooly
puttest thy wyll to his wyll / thou shalt
synde thy selfe oncd to him & set i a great
inwarde peace/for nothing shall sauoure
so well to the nor so moche please the as
that the wyll and pleasure of god be fully
done in the/who so euer therfore i a pure
simple herte lyke his intente by to god &
doyde hym selfe fro all inordinate loue or
displeasure of any worldely thynges shall
be moze apte to receyue grace and shall be
best worthy to haue the gyfte of deuocyon/for there our lord geueth his blessing

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The fourth boke. Jo. Lxxii.

where he fyndeth the vessels emptye and
hopye/and the more perfyctly a man can
renounce hym selfe and all worldly thinges /
and can by dyspyssuge of hym selfe
the more dye to hym selfe/ so moche the so-
oner grace shall come & shall the more plen-
tuously entre in to him / and the hygher
shall lyfte by his herte into god. Than
his herte shall se and abounde & shall mee-
naye and be delated in hym selfe for the
hande of our lorde is with him/& he hath
hooly put him into his hande for euer. So
so shall a man be blessed that seeketh god
with all his herte & taketh nat bys soule
in bayne. Suche a man in receyving this
holy sacrament deserueth great grace of
the onyng in god/for he loketh nat to his
owne deuotion and consolacyon / but to
the glozy and honoure of god.

¶ That we shulde open al our necessities
to Christ and aske his grace.

The. xvi. Chapter.

O Most swete lorde whom I desyre de-
uoutly to receyue/ thou knowest the
infinite & necessite that I am in: in how
many synnes & byesses I lye/howe ofte I
am greued/tempted/troubled / & defouled

The fourth boke

I come to the for remedy / & I make my
 prayour to the for cōforte / and I speke to
 hym that knoweth all thyngs: to whome
 all my secrete and inwarde thoughten be
 manysfeste and open / and the which onely
 mayste perfittly counsaile me & helpe me /
 thou knowest what I nede to haue and
 howe pooze I am in vertue. Lo I stande
 before the pooze & naked askynge & desy-
 ryng thy grace. Refresh me therfore thy
 poozest seruaunt begging for spiritual fode
 kyndle my herte with the fyre of thy loue
 & illumyne my blyndnes with the clere-
 nes of thy pscence / tourne all worldly thin-
 ges into bytternes to me and al greuous
 thynges & contraryous thynges into pa-
 cience / & al create thynges into dyspylyng
 & into forgettyng of them / lyfte vp myne
 herte to the into heuen & suffre me nat to
 lyue vayne ne to erre in this worlde.

Thou lord fro henceforth shalte be swete
 to me for ever: for thou arte only my mete
 & drinke / my loue / my roye / my swetnes / &
 all my goodnes / wolde god that thou wol-
 dest kyndle me: inflame me / & tourne me
 hooly into the that I maye be made one
 spyrte with the by grace of swarde onyng
 and meltynge of brennyng loue into the /

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The fourth booke. Fo. C. lxxiii.

suffre me nat to departe fro the fastyng & dyte / but worke with me mercifully as thou haste ofte tymes meruaylously wrought with thy beloued seruantes in tyme paste : what meruayle were it if I were all inflamed in to the & sayled in my selfe syth thou arte the fyre alwaye brennyng and neuer saylynge / the loue purifyenge the hertes / and lyghtenynge the vnderstandynge of all thy creatures .

¶ Of the brennyng loue and great recepyon that we shulde haue to receyue Christ. The. xvi. Chap.

With hygh deuotion and brennyng loue / & with all seruoure & affection of the herte I desyre to receyue the lord as many saynts & deuoute persones haue desired the in theyr comunion and that most specially pleased the in the holynes of theyr lyfe & were in moste brennyng deuotion to the. O my lord god my louer eternall / all my goodnes & felicitye without ending: I coueyte to receyue the with as great desyre & as due reuerence as any holy man euer dyd or myght do: and though I be vnworthy to haue suche felysynge in deuotion as they had: yet neuer

The fourth booke.

theles I offre to the the holic affectyon of
my herte as verely as if I onely had all
the brenning & flaming desyres that they
had / & ouer that all that a meke mynde
may ymagyne & desyre: I gyue & offre to
the with hyghe reuerence & worshyppe & in-
warde seruour / and I desyre to reserue no
thing to my selfe / but me & all myne I of-
fer to the i sacrifice feely & most liberally.
And also my lord god my creature & re-
demer / with suche affectio / reuerence / laude
and honoure with suche thanks / dignite
& loue / & with suche fapthe / hope & purite
I desyre to receyue the this daye as thy
most holy & glorious mother the virgyne
Mary desyred & receyued the / whā she me
help & deuoutly answered the Angel that
thowed her the mystery of thy incarnatio
& said. Ecce ancilla dñe fiat mihi secundū
vbi tuū. That is to say / lo I am the hād
mayde of god / be it done to me after thy
worde / & as thy blessed precursour saynt
Johē the Baptyste most excellent of all
sayntes was glad & ioyed i great ioy in the
holy ghoſte throughte thy presēce whā he
was yet i his mothers wōbe / & after whā
he sawe the walkynge among the people
beep mekely & with deuoute affectyon by

The fourth booke. Fo. C. lxxiii.

said the frende of a spouse that standeth & hereth: I opeyth with great ioye for to here the voyce of the spouse / & so coueyte I in great & holy desyres to be enflamed & to presente my selfe to the with all my herte & also I offre & yelde to the all the laudes of deuoute hertes / the brennyng affectyons / excessiue thoughtes / spirituall illuminations / & heuently visions / with all vertues & prayes done or to be done by any creature in heuē or in erth for me: & for all the that be comytted to my prayer: that thou mayste be worthely lauded & glorified for euer / excepte lordē god my mynde & the desyres of the manyfolde laudes & blessinges that by me are to the due of ryght after the multitude of thy greatnes more thā can be spoken: & all these I yelde to the & desyre to yelde to the euery day and euery moment: & with all my desyre & affectiō me help croste & pray al heuently spirites & al saythfull people to yelde with me thākinges & laudes to the: & I beseeche the that all people tribus & tonges may magnifie thy holy & thy moste swete name with great ioye and brennyng deuocion / and that al they that reuerently and deuoutly minystrer this most hyghe sacramēt / or with ful

The fourth booke.

fayth receyue it maye thereby deserue to
spende before the thy grace & mercy / and
whan they haue obteyned the deuorpon
that they desyred & be spiritually onyed
to the: & be thereby well cōforyted & meruay
loufly refreſhyd and be departed fro the
heuely table / that they will haue me poze
synner in they remembraunce. Amen.

That a man shall nat be a curyous
sercher of this holy sacramente but
a meke folower of Chryſt / sub
duynge alway his reason to
the fayth. The. xviij. Cha.

Thou must beware of a curious and
vnpiofytable serchynge of this
moste profounde sacrament if thou
wyldestar be drowned into the great dep
peth of doutfulness: for he that is the ser
choute of goddes maiesty shalbe anon
thurſte out of glory: god is of power to
worke moche more than mā may vnder
ſtande. Neuertheles a meke & an humble
serching of the trouth / redy alway to be
taught & to walke after the teachynge of
holy fathers is sufferable: blessed is that
ſymplicite that leueth the waye of harde

The fouerth booke. Folio. C.lxxv.

questions and goth in the playne & strait
fast way of the comaundement; of god ma-
ny haue lost theyr deuotion bycause they
wolde serche hygher thyng; than percey-
ueth to the. I saith & a good lyfe is asked
of the & nat the highnes of vnderstanding
nor the depenes of the mysteries of god/
if thou may nat vnderstande nor take such
thyng; as be withi the/howe mayst thou
tha cōprehēde those ihyng; that be aboue
the/submitte thy selfe therfore mekely to
god & submytte also thy reason to faith;&
the lyght of knowlege & of true vndersta-
ndyng shalbe gūen vnto the as it shalbe
most profitable & necessary for the/some by
greuously tēpted of the fayth & of the sa-
crament:but that is nat to be reputed to
the:but rather to y^e enemy:therfore care
nat for hi nor disput nat with thi though-
tes nor aswere nat to y^e dout; that thine
enemy shall lay vnto the / but beleue the
word; of god & beleue his saytes & pphes;
& the wycked enemy shal anone fle away
fro the:& it is ofte tymes moche profitable
that the seruantes of god shuld fele & sus-
teyne suche dout; for theyr more profic:
comonly y^e enemy tēp teth nat vnfaithful
people & synners whōc he hath sure pos-

The fourth booke.

session/but he tepleth & vexeth in dyuers
maners the faithful & deuoute psons. So
therfore with a pure & vndouled sayth &
with an humble reuerence prece to this sa-
cramēt/ & what so euer thou canst nat vi-
derstande cōmpte it faithfully to god. For
god wyl nat deceyue the/but he shalbede-
ceiued that trusteth ouermuche to hyselife
God walketh wth the siple psons: he ope-
neth hymselfe & sheweth hyselife to meke y
sons: he giveth vnderstanding to the that
be pooze in spirite: he openeth the wette
to pure clene myndes: & hydeth his grace
fro curious mē & proude mē. Mānes rea-
son is feble & weyke & anone may bedecy-
ued/but faith is stable & true & can nat be
deceyued/therfore all reason & al natural
workyng must folowe faith without fer-
ther reasonig for faith & loue i this most
holy & most excellēt sacramēt surmonte &
worketh hygh in secret maner aboue al rea-
son. And the eternal god & the lord of in-
finite power doth great thyngs in heuē &
in erth that may nat be serched/for if the
workyng of god were such that they might
be lyghtly vnderstande by mānes reaso/
they were nat so merueylous & so inestym-
able as they be. **C. Finis.**

A spirituall glasse. Folio. C. lxxvi.

Rede distinctely. Pray deuoutely.
Sigh deeply. Suffre patiently.
Meeke you lowely. Giue no sentence ha-
stely. Speke but trath and that truly.
Preuente your speche discretely. Do your
dedes in charite. Temptacion resyste
strongly. Breke his heed shortely. wepe
hytterly. Haue compassyon tenderly. Do
good work busily. Loue perseuerantly.
Loue hertely. Loue faithfully. Loue god
alonely / and all other for him charita-
bly. Loue in aduersite. Loue in prosperite.
Thynke alway of loue. For loue is none
other but god hym selfe. Thus to loue
bryngeth the lover to loue without ende.

Amen.

Here endeth the folowping
of Chyrche.

Hereafter foloweth an
Epistle of saynt Barnarde
called the golden Epistle / which he sent
to a yong religious mā whom he moche
loued. And to the encrease of the deuo-
tion of them that can rede Englyshe and
vnderstande nat latyn tonge / it is trans-
lated.

The golden Epyll.
lated out of latin in to Englyshe in such
maner as herafter ensueth. And it is in
some booke imprinted in the later ende
of y^e booke called i latin Imitatio Chris-
ti that is to say in Englyshe the folowing
of Christe.

A Than after the sayde Epistle folowe
fourre revelations of saynt Birget wher-
of the firste treateth that nothyng pleas-
eth god so moche as that he be beloued
about al thyng. The secoude treateth
of the lyues actyue and contemplatyue.
The thyrde sheweth that there shall be
in tyme to come so greate deuotion in
gentyls / that christen men spiritually
shalbe in maner theyr seruauntes. The
fourth declareth what thynges be neces-
sary to hym that desyret to visyte the
landes of the infydels.

Here begynneth the Epistle of
saynt Bernarde/which he sent to a
yonge religyous man whom he
moche loued that is called the
golden Epyll.



That the wyldernesse of
thy religion may were
swete and pleisant vnto
the/and that thou shalte
nat be founde vnkynd in
the syght of him that
was most mekely cruci-
fied for the: I counsaile the that now
thou hast taken it vppon the thou caste
it nat lyghtly a waye lest happely an o-
ther more acceptable to god than thou
take it and occuppe thy place / and that
thou be cast out as a synkynge caryen.
Consyder therfore howe moch thou arte
bounde to the veray trewe lambe/that is
Christ whiche was ledde to be offered in
sacrifyce for the vppon the auter of the
crosse / and suffred many represses and
mooste harde scourgynges of them / of
whom he had suche compassion that he
wept tenderly vppon them. Therfore
that thou mayst attayne to lyke thyng
gall vnto thy lorde Iesu with deuoute
prayer besechyng hym that thou mayste
as a trewe membre be onyed through
good vertuous workes/to the very trewe
head that is Christ. But thou mayste
nat come to that poynte without his
Imita. Zi. grace

The golden Epistell.

grace do helpe the as well before as after. for without grace all thy workinge shalbe vnprofytable and vayne / lyke as he watcheth in vayne that belueth to kepe a cytie without our lord.

Therefore if thou wylte fynde his grace and be truly solytarye / two thynges be necessarye to the. The fyrste is / that thou so withdraue thy selfe fro al transitory thynges / that thou care no more for them than if there were none suche / and that thou sette thy selfe at so vyle a pryce in thyne owne syght / that thou accompte thy selfe as nought / belcuinge all men to be better than thou arte / and more to please god. Also what so euer thou here of se of relygious persones / thinke that they do it to a good intent / though it seme nat so / for mannes suppytyon is ofte discreyed / and therefore iudge thou nothyng in certayn / speke no uer any thing that may sounde to thyne owne pryse but labour rather to kepe thy vertue secrete than thy vices. In no wise speke no puell of no man / howe frewe and manifeste so euer it be / and more gladly gyue herpnge whan a man is praised than whan he is dysprayed.

Also

The golden Epistle. Folio. C. lxxviij.
Also whan thou spekest: let thy wordes
be trewe / sobre / apte / weighty / and of
god. If a secular man speke with the and
aske of the many questyons / as soone
as thou canst bryake of the tale / and set
the to those thynges that be of god.
what worldely thyng so euer be happed
to the or to any other / howe dere beloued
so euer he be vnto the / care nat for it / if
it be prosperous and lykynge / ioy nat in
it / and if it be myslykynge sorowe nat for
it / but thynke all as nought / and laude
and prayse almyghty god. Beke solita-
rinesse asmoche as thou can / so that thou
mayst dyligently take hede of thyne owne
gostely helth. / 2 / Flye talkynge and hayne
tangelynge as moche as thou mayst / for
it is more sure waye to kepe silence than
to speke. After complayne speke nat tyl
masse be done on the daye folowynge /
but it be for a great cause. whan thou
seest any thyng that displeaseth the / con-
sider whether there be nat lyke thyng
in the that displeaseth other / and if there
be cutte it lightly a waye. And if thou se
or here any thyng that pleaseth the /
consider whether it be in the / and if it be
holde it warly / and if it be nat take it to
the

The golden Epistell.

the / and so it shalbe to the as a glasse to
loke vpon. **B**udge at nothyng to
warde no man / but whan thou beluest
it maye profyte his soule helthe / howe
greuous so euer it be to the / neuer as-
serme nor deny any thyng hedily but
let thy denynges and affirminges be all
waye tempred with discretion. Abstayne
thy selfe alwaye from all mockinges and
from all dissolute laughynges.

In all thy saynges be haue the so that
thou haue a certayntye of all thy dedes
and wordes that they be true / and those
that be doutfull / let them go as thynges
that be euell. **T**he seconde that is neces-
sary to the is / that thou shalte so fully
offre thy selfe to god that thou shalte say
nothyng nor do nothyng / but that
thou beluest verily wyl please hym /
and take hede of thy seruice with greate
deuotion so that that thou sayeste with
thy mouth be also in thy herte. **H**aue
these thre thynges alwayes in thy mynd /
what thou hast ben / what thou arte / and
what thou shalte be. what thou hast
ben / synnyng corruption. what thou
arte / a vessell full of donge. what thou
shalte be / meate for wormes.

Alia

The golden Epistell. Folio. L. lxxix.

Also thynke on the paynes of them that
be in hell / and that they shall neuer be
ended. And that for a lytell delectation
in this worlde they suffre the paynes.

And lykewise thynke in the glorie of the
kyngdome of heuen the whiche shall ne-
uer haue ende / and that lyghtly and in
an shorte tyme it may be wonne. And
than remembre howe great sorowe and
waylinge shalbe to them that haue losse
so great a glorie for so lytell a thyng.

Also whan thou haste any thyng that
displeaseth the or greueth the / thynke
that if thou shalt come to hel thou shalt
haue alwaye that displeasure and all o-
ther also that thou mooste dydest whan
any pryncypall freest cometh / thynke on
that saynte that than is worshypped in
the churche of god / what thynges he suf-
fered for Christe / for they were but shorte
and what he wanne therby for they be
euerlastyng. Thynke also that as well
the tormentes of good men / as the ioyes
of puel men in this worlde be paste and
gone / and that neuerthelesse good men
by theyr tormentes haue receyued eter-
nall glorie / and puel men by theyr short
wordly ioye eternall payne / and thoughe
Z. b. thou be

The golden Epytall.

thou be neuer so slouthfull/ yet take this
lytel writynge and remembre and yma-
gyne al these thinges diligently that I
haue sayde/ and at the leest bethynke the
on the tyme that thou thus leste/ and
that they that be in hell wolde gyue all
the worlde for it. whan thou haste any
tribulations/ thynke that they that be in
heuen waite them/ and that they that
be in hel haue many mo. **E**very daye at
the lest whan thou goest to bed/ crampe
dilygently what thou hast thought the
day before/ what thou hast done/ & what
thou hast sayd/ & how thou hast spent the
precious tyme y^e was gyue y^e to wyne ther
in the kyngdome of heuen. And if thou
hast past it well/ thanke god and laude
hym for it/ and if thou hast spent it yuell
and negligently: be sozry for it/ and deserre
nat the nexte daye to be confessed: than
I put this in the ende/ to thentent that
thou shalt diligently ymagine as it were
two cyties before the/ one full of all tur-
mentes as hell is/ the other full of all co-
solation as is the kyngdome of heuen/
and that it behoueth the of necessite to
entre and come in to the one of them/ be-
hold than what might draw the agaynst
the

The golden Epistell. Folio. C. lxxx.
For wylt to the puell cytye / and what
myght set the from the good cytye / and
I trowe that thou shalt fynd nothyng
that myght do it (if thou woldeste with
all thyne hert turne the to god / and put
tyng away all neglygence / wolde mekly
call to hym for grace and mercy) the
whiche be that is moost blessed aboue al
pouche safe to graunt vnto vs. Amen.

☞ That nothyng please the god so
moche as that he beloued aboue al thing
as our lady sheweth to saynt Birget by
example of a pagan woman / whiche op-
tayne great grace for the great loue
she had to her creatour / as it appe-
reth in the. vi. booke of saynt

Birgettes reuelations/
the. i. Chapitre.

The mother of god our lady saynt
Mary speketh to the spouse of her
sonne saint Birget / sayenge thus.
Nothyng so moche please the god / as
that a man loue hym aboue all thyng /
as I shall shewe to the by a symilitude
of a pagan woman / whiche knowynge
nothyng of the saythe / thoughte to her
selfe

The golden Epistell.

selfe thus I knowe sayd he of what ma-
ter I am come in to this worlde / and of
what thynges I came in to my mothers
wombe . And I beleue that it had ben
impossyble that I shulde haue had my
body so knyt togyther as it is / and my
reason and vnderstandyng / but they had
be gyuen vnto me and therefore I knowe
well there is some creatour and mayster
of me that hathe made me a resonoble
creature / nat deformed me lyke to wor-
mes or serpentis wherfore me thinketh
that though I had many husbādes and
all they called me / I wolde rather come
at one callynge of my creatour than at
the callynge of them all. I haue also ma-
ny sonnes and many daughters / and ne-
uerthelesse if I sawe them haue meate
in their handes and I knewe my crea-
tour to wante meate / I wolde take the
meate from my children and wold glady-
ly gyue it to my creatour / I haue also
many possessions whiche I order after
myne owne wyll / and neuertheles if I
knewe the wyll of my creatour / I wolde
glady leaue myne owne wyll and dis-
pose them to his honour. But my dought-
er se what god dyd with this paga wo-
man.

I
man.
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The golden Epistell. Folio. Lxxxii.
man. He sent vnto her one of his electe
seruauntes that instructed her in the
faith/and god hym selfe visited her herie
as thou mayste well knowe and vnder-
stande hereafter by the answer of
the woman. For whan that man shew-
ed vnto her that there was one god
without begynnynge and without en-
dynge/that is the creatour and maker of
all thynges/the answered and sayde. It
is well to be beleued that he p^r hath cre-
ated me & all thinges/ that he hath no cre-
atour aboue hym/ and it is lyke that his
life is euerlastynge that myght gyue me
lyfe. And whan the woman herde fer-
ther that the same creatour toke man-
hode of a byrgyne / and that he preached
in this worlde and taught the people in
his owne person / the answered. It is
to beleue god in euery thyng / and than
she sayd further. I praye the shewe me
what be the wordes that my creatour
dyd speake and commaunde / for I wyl
holly leaue myne owne wyl and fully
obey to hym / and to euery worde that
he hath spoken. Than whan he decla-
red vnto her of the passion of our lord /
of his crosse/his dethe / and of his resur-

The goldin Epistell.

receiſ. The woman with great weeping answered and ſayd: Blessed be my creatour p^r ſo patiently ſhe weth his charitie in the worlde/ p^r he had to vs in heuen. And therfore if I loued hym fyrſte by- cauſe he created me / I am nowe more bounden to loue hym / by cauſe he hath ſhe weth me the ſtreight waye to heuen/ and hath redeemed me with his precious blode/ and I am bounde therfore to ſerue hym with all my ſtrength and al p^r partes of my bodye/ and I am bounden alſo to remoue all my deſire from me that I had firſte to my poſſeſſions/ and to my chyldren and kynſmen / and onely to deſire to ſee my creatour in his glorie that neuer ſhall haue ende. Then ſayde our blessed lady to ſaynt Birget (Lo doughter) Howe great rewarde that woman had for her great loue. So is dayly gyuen greate rewarde to euery man after the loue that he hath to god whyle he lyueth in this worlde.

Our lord Ieſu Chriſte gyueth to his ſpouſe ſaynt Birget a notable doctrine of p^r lyues Actiue & Contemplatiue/ whiche be notable ſignified by **M**artha and

The golden Epistell. Folio. C. lxxii.
and Mary Magdaleyn / that is to saye
howe a man shall begyn & profite in the
lyfe spūall / & in grace and vertue that he
may finally ascende to the highe degre
of the loue of god and of his neigh-
bour / which doctrine appereth
in the. vi. booke of the reuelatiōs
of saynt Birget / the. lrv.

Chapitre. 4

The sonne of god spekethe to his
spouse saynt Birgette / sayenge
thus There be two lyues whiche
be lykened to Martha & Mary Mag-
daleyne / and who so euer wyl folowe
tho two lyues muste make pure confes-
sion of all his synnes / takynge very con-
fession for them / haupng full wyl neuer
after to offende. And the fyrst lyfe as I
do wytnesse my selfe in my gospel / Ma-
ry Magdaleyn dyd chuse whiche ledeth
a man to contēplation / that is to saye to
the beholdynge of heuēly thinges / and
that is the best parte and is the very way
of the lyfe euēlastyng. Therefore every
man that coueteth to folowe the lyfe of
Mary / that is to saye the lyfe contem-
platyue It suffiseth to hym to haue one
ly the

The golden Epistle.

by the necessaries for the body / that is to
say clothyng without vanptie / mete and
drynke in scarcitie and nat in supfluytie.
Chastitie without any puel delectation/
fastyng and abstinence after the ordy-
nauunce of the church / and he that fast-
eth must take hede that he be not sur-
moche enfebled and made weyke by his
vnrasonable fastyng / lest he thozoughe
that weyknes he be enforced to leue his
prayers and his counsaile gyuyng / or
other good dedes wherwith he myght
bothe profyte hym selfe and his neigh-
bour also. And he must also diligently
take hed that he be nat through his fast-
yng the more slowe to iustyce / nor more
slacke to the workes of mercy / for why:
to punyssh the rebels and to bryng infideles
vnder the yoke of the sayth is requysite
greate strengthe as well of body as of
soule. Therfore euey seke person that
woide rather to the honour of god: fast
then ete / shall haue lyke rewarde for his
good wyl / as he that fasteth of charytie.
And in lyke wyse / he that for obedience
eteth / desyryng rather to fast: the to ete /
shall haue lyke rewarde as he y^e fasteth.
Seconde the contemplatyue man shall
nat ioye

The golden Epistle. Foli. C. lxxxiii.
that ioye of the honoure of the worlde/
nor of the prosperitie therof / ne sorowe
for his aduersitie / but he shall ioye specia-
lly in this / that wicked men be become
deuoute men / that louers of the worlde
be become louers of god / and that good
men profyte in goodnes / and be through
good labour and diligence in the scripture
of god made dayly more deuoute than
other. Of this also the contemplatue
man shall sorowe that synners be made
dayly worse and worse / that almyghty
god is nat beloued of his creatures / as
he ought to be / and that the commaun-
dementes of god be dispised and sette at
nought. Thyrdly the contemplatue
man maye nat be ydel / ne no more may
he that vseth the actyue lyfe / but anone
whan he hath taken his necessarie slepe
he shall ryse and thanke almyghty god
with all his hert for that he hath create
and made all thynges / and that of his
charitie by takynge our nature he hath
reformed and renewed mankynde / wher-
ynge by his passion and dethe the loue
that he hath to man / whiche is so greete
that none can be greater. Also the con-
templatue man shall thanke almyghty

God.

A. A. t.

god

The golden Epistell.

god for all them that be saued) and for
all them that be in ~~pergumens~~ / and for
them that yet be leuyng in the worlde/
prayenge mekely for them vnto our lord
that he suffre them nat to be tempted
aboue theyr power. The contempla-
tyue man also muste be discrete in his
prayers and be well ordred in his laudes
and prayspnges of god / for yf he haue
sufficient to lyue with without labour
or busynesse he muste make the longer
prayers. And if he be wery and tempta-
tion rise in his prayers / he may labour
with his handes some honest and profy-
table werke / eyther for hym selfe if he
haue nede or for other. And if he be in
maner yrekesome with bothe / that is to
saye : with prayer and labour / then he
may haue some other honest occupacion
or here some good holsome wordes or
profytable counseyls in all sobernes / all
scurylitic and vncleane wordes sette a
parte tyll the body and soule be made
more apte / and more able to the seruite
of god. And if the contemplatyue man
haue nat sufficient to lyue with all but
through his labour / than maye he make
the shorter prayers for his necessary la-
bour!

The golden Epistle. Folio. C. lxxxiij.
bour/ and that labour shalbe the perfec-
tion and encreasynge of his prayer/ and
if he can nat labour nor maye nat/ than
let hym nat be a shamed/ ne thinke it nat
greuous to begge/ but rather that he be
iopous for it/ for than he foloweth me
the sonne of god that made my self poore
to make man ryche/ and if the contem-
platyue man be vnder obedyence/ than
he must lyue after the obedyence of his
prelate/ and his rewarde shalbe double
more than if he were at lyberte.

Fourthly the contemplatyue man maye
nat be couitous/ no more maye the ac-
tyue man/ nor he maye nat be prodygall
for as the actyue man distributeth tem-
porall goodes for god/ so the contempla-
tyue man must distribute his spirituall
goodes. Moreover if the contemplatyue
man wyl haue almyghty god inwardly
in his herte: let hym beware to saye thus
as many do. It suffyleth to me if I can
saue myne owne soule/ for if I can do so/
what haue I to do with the dedes of o-
ther men/ or if I be good my selfe/ what
is it to me how other lyue. O my dought-
er/ they that say or thinke so/ if they saw
they frende dishonest and troubled/ they

Gold, A A. u. Wolbe

The golden Epistell.

1. wolde renne with all they; polwee to the
2. bethe/that they; frende myght be dely-
3. uered out of his trouble/so shall the con-
4. templatyue man do/he must sorowe that
5. almyghty god is offended that his bro-
ther which is his neighbour hath occa-
sion to offende. And if any fall into syn/
the contemplatiue man shall endeuoure
hym all that he can to helpe hym out of
his synne with all discrecyon. And if he
haue trouble or persecution for it / lette
hym leaue that place and seke a nother
place that is more quiet. For I my selfe
that am very god / sayde to my dyscy-
ples thus. If they persecute you in one
cittyfye ye in to another : and so dyd
Paule the whiche by cause he shulde be
more necessary a nother tyme / was let
go by a wall in a basket. Therfore that
the contemplatyue man may be lyberall
and pitious / there be fyue thynges ne-
cessarye to hym. The fyrst is a house in
the whiche his ghestes may slepe. The
seconde is clothinge to clothe the naked.
The thyrde is meat to fede the hungry.
The fourth is fyre to warme them that
be colde. The fyfte is medicus for them
that be seke that is to saye: good confor-
table

table

The golden Epistell. folio. C lxxv.
table wordes with the charitie of god.
☞ The house of the contemplatue
man is his hert/wherof the yuell ghestes
be all tho thynges that trouble his hert/
that is to saye / wrathe / heuencelle coue-
tyse/pyrde/and many other lyke. Ther-
fore all tho vices whan they come / they
shall in maner lye as ghestes that be on
slepe/and as they that be at rest . For
as an hoste receyueth yuell ghestes and
good with pacience / so the contempla-
tue man muste suffre all thynges for
god through vertue of pacience / and in
no wise to consent to vices / nat to them
that seme leest ne to delyte in them / but
as moche as he maye be lytell and lytell
throughe the helpe of grace / to remoue
them clerely out of the herte. And if he
can nat clerely remoue them / he muste
suffre them pacyently agaynst his wyll
as enemyes/and neuer to assent to them
knowynge certenly that they shall pros-
fyte hym to the greater rewarde in he-
uen and nat to dampnation. Second the
contemplatue man muste haue clothes
to clothe his ghestes/that is to say meke-
nesse bothe inwarde and outwarde /
and compassyon of mynde for the afflic-

Gold. AA.iii. tyon

The golden Epistell.
Upon of his neyghbour. And if the con-
templatiue man be dispised of the world/
lette him thynke howe I the god al-
myghty beyng contempned and dyspre-
sed suffred pacyently / and whan I was
iudged I helde my peace / and whan I
was scourged and crowned with thorn-
es I murmured nat. The contempla-
tyue man also muste take hede that he
shewe nat to them that reprove hym or
rebuke hym any synnes of anger or im-
paciencye / but that he blesse the that per-
secute him / that they that se it may blesse
god whōe the contemplatiue man doth
folowe / and almyghty god shal gyue bles-
synges for tho maledictions. The con-
templatiue mā muste be warre also that
he do nat speke euill of them nor rebuke
them that do greue hym / for it is damp-
nable to backbite other / and wyllfully
to here them that do backbite or thurgh
impaciencye to reprove or rebuke his
neyghbour. Than that the contempla-
tyue man maye haue perfectly the gyfte
of mekenes and paciencye / he muste stry-
ve to admonishe and warne them that
do backbite other / of the greate perill that
they stande in / and that he exhorte them
in al

The golden Epistell. folio. L. lxxxvi.
in all charyte with wordes and with ex-
amples to perfite mekenes. Also the clo-
thyng of the contemplatyue man must
be compassyon / for if he se his neygh-
bour do any synne : he muste haue com-
passyon of hym / prayenge to almyghty
god to haue mercy vpon hym. And if
he se hym suffre any wronge or hurte or
reproue / he muste be sorry for hym and
helpe hym with his prayers / and with
his ayde and diligence / and that if nede
be before the greate men of the worlde
for the true perfite compassyon seethe
nat that is his / but that is his neygh-
bours. And yf the contemplatyue man
be suche one that he is nat herde with
princes / and that it profitethe nat that
he go out of his selle . Than he shall
praye hertely for them that be in trou-
ble and almyghty god that is the behol-
der of mannes herte / for the charitic of
hym that prayeth / shall turne the hertes
of the people to the peace and quietnes
of hym that is in trouble so that he shall
eyther be deliuered out of his trouble /
or he shall haue pacience sente hym of
god to suffre it / and so his rewarde shall be
doubled. Therfore suche clothynge / that

Gold.

AA.iii.

is to

The golden Epytall.

is to say: mekenes and compassion must
be in the hert of the contemplatyue man
for nothyng so myghtely draweth god
in to the hert as mekenes and compas-
sion of the neyghbour dothe. Thyrdly
the cōtemplatyue man must haue meate
and drynke for his ghestes/for somtyme
puell ghestes do lodge in the herte of the
contemplatyue man/that is to say whan
the herte is drawen fro beholdynge of it
selfe and coueteth thynges delectable/
to se worldly thynges / to haue posses-
sion of temporall goodes. And whan
the cyres desyre to here his owne ho-
nour/the fleshe desireth to delyte in car-
nall thynges / the spirite leyth excuse of
his feylenesse / and that synne is but
lyght / and whan there cometh a payn-
fulnesse and a hardnesse to do good de-
des / and a forgetfulnesse of thynges to
come. And whan he thinketh his good
dedes great and forgetteth his puell de-
des. Agaynst all suche ghestes it is ne-
cessarye for the contemplatyue man to
haue good counseyle / and nat to dys-
semble as though he were a slepe / but
that he armed strongly with true faith
answere to suche ghestes: sayenge thus.

I wyl

The golden Epistell. Fol. C. lxxviii.

I wyll haue no thyng of temporal goodys
but barcly for the sustaynyng of my bo
dily kynde / & I wyll nat spende no hour
nor time but to the honour of god / nor I
will nat take hede what is fayre or foule
in the worlde / ne what is pleasaunt or
displeasaunt to the fleshe or sauoury or
nat sauoury to the mouth / but to y^e plea
sure of god and helthe of my soule / for I
wold nat lyue one hour but to the honour
of god. Such a wyl is meate and drynke
for the ghestes that come / and that an
swere extineteth and putteth awaye all
inordinate delites and pleasures of the
world and of the fleshe. Fourthly the co
ntemplatyue man must haue fyre to warme
his ghestes and to gyue them lyght / this
fyre is the hete of the holy gost / it is im
possible any man to leaue his owne wyl
or to forsake the carnall loue of his fren
des or the loue of riches / but throughe
the instincte and hete of the holy ghost.
Also the contemplatyue man / howe ho
ly and pefite so euer he be / maye nat of
hym selfe begyne nor continue in good
lyfe without helpe of grace in the holy
gost. Therefore that the contemplatyue
man maye set a lyght before his ghestes.

Gold.

A A. v.

First

The fourth boke.

First lette hym thynke thus: Almyghty
god hath created me / that I shulde ho-
nour hym above all thynges. And in ho-
ndurynge hym / that I shulde loue hym
and drede hym / and he was borne of a
virgyn to teache me the waye to heuen/
and that I shulde folowe that waye in
all mekenes. And with his dethe he
opened the pates of heuen/that I shulde
with greate desire hast me thither. Also
the contemplatue man muste examyne
diligently all his dedes/all his thoughtes
and all his affections/that is to say how
he hath offended god/and howe patient-
ly god suffreth the man / and howe many
wayes he calleth man vnto hym/ suche
thoughtes and suche gheskes of the con-
templatue man: be in maner but as
they were a slepe/ but they be illumynate
with the fyre of the holy goost/the which
fyre than comethe in to the herte whan
the contemplatue man thynketh howe
reasonable it is to serue god / and whan
he thynketh that he had leuer suffre all
payne / than wittingly to prouoke god
to wrathe / whose goodnes his soule is
create and made/and it is also redeemed
with his precious blode. **Than also the**
herte

The golden Epistle. Folio. C. lxxxviii.
herte hath hete of his heuenly fyre that
is the holy gooste / whan the soule thin-
kethe and discernethe to what intent e-
uery ghest / that is to say / euery thought
commeth . And whether it moue the
mynde to couyte ioye perpetually or trā-
sitorie / and that he leaue no thought vn-
discussed ne vncorrected with drede of
god . Therefore that this fyre maye be
gotten / and whan it is gotten that it may
be safely kepte . The contemplatyue
man muste laye to dyre stickes / that is to
saye: he muste diligently take hede of the
motions of the fleshe / that it rebell nat
agaynst the spirite . And he muste put
to all his diligence that the wordes of
pitie and good prayers maye be deuout-
ly increased / wherwith the holy ghoſte
maye haue delyte / but he muste specially
knowe and consyder that where a fyre
is made in a close vessell that hath no
boydaunce anone the fyre goeth out and
the vessell waxeth colde . So it is wpth
the contemplatyue man / if he wolde nat
lyue to nothyng els but that he myght
do honour to god / it is expedient that
his mouth be opened / and that the flame
of his charytie go forth . Than is the
mouth

The golden Epistell.

mouth opened whan by his speakinge
whiche procedeth of feruent charitie / he
getteth spiritual childer to god / but the
cōtemplatyue man must take good hede
that he open his mouth to preach / where
good mē shalbe made more feruent / and
where yuell men may be amended / where
tyghtwysenes maye be encreased / and
yuell customes maye be put awaye. For
the apostle Paule somtyme wold haue
spoken but the holyghost dyd prohibite
hym / and so somtyme he helde his peace /
and whā tyme conueniēt cam (he spake)
and somtyme he vsed softe wordes / and
another tyme more sharper wordes / and
alwaye he ordered his wordes to the ho-
nour and glorie of god / and to the comfor-
tynge and strenthynge of the faith. And
if the contemplatyue man may nat pre-
che but he hath good wyll and conyng
to preach / and lacketh good herers / he
muste do as the fore dothe / the whiche
goth about many mountayns and scr-
chethe with his fete in many places / and
where he fyndeth the softeste place and
mooste apte for hym / there he maketh a
dene to rest hym in. So the contempla-
tyue man must assay with wordes / with

exam

no
Gole to
apyn 23
moly

The golden Epistell. Fol. C.lxxxix.
examples / and with good prayes / the
herics of many people / and where he syn
deth the herics most apt to here the woꝝ-
des of god / there he must tary in counsay
lyng and in inducyng the people to god
all that he can. The contemplatiue man
also must labour al that he can that co-
uenient auoydance maye be had for his
flame / for the greater that the flame is
the mo be illumined and made hote ther-
by. Than hath the flame conuenient
auoydaunce / whan the contemplatiue
man neyther dredeth rebukes ne couey-
seth nat his owne prayse / whan he ney-
ther dredeth aduersites ne deliteth hym
nat in prosperities : and than it is more
pleasure to god that he do his good de-
des openly than priuely / that they that
se them maye glorifye god. And it is to
vnderstande : that the contemplatiue
man muste put forthe two flames / one
secretely / another openly that is to saye
he muste haue a double mekenes. The
fyꝛste muste be within forth in the herte.
the seconde must be without forth to the
worlde. The fyꝛste is that the contempla-
tiue man thynke hym selfe vnworthy
and vnprofitable to all good workes.
and

The golden Epistell.

and that he preferre nat hym selfe in his
owne syght aboue no man / ne that he
coueyte nat to be lauded nor to be sene in
the worlde that he shye pryde / and desyre
god aboue althyng: folowynge his wordes
and his techynge. And if the contem-
platiue man put forth such a flame with
good workes / than his herte shalbe illu-
mynded with charite / and all the contra-
rious thynges that come to hym shal
lyghtly be suffred and overcome. The se-
cond flame must be openly / for if perfyte
mekenes be in the hert: it muste also ap-
peere in his apparell without fort he / and
be herde in his wordes / and be perfor-
med in his dedes. Trwe mekenesse is in
the apparell whau the contemplatiue
man coueyteth more to haue clothyng of
smal pryce whiche is profitable / than clo-
thyng of greater value wherby he maye
fall in to pryde / and in to a desyre to be
sene in the worlde / for that apparell that
is litell worth: and is called in the world
vyle and abiecte / is very fayre and pre-
cious before god / for it prouoketh meke-
nes. And that apparell that is of grete
pryce and is called fayre in the worlde /
is very foule and vnseemly before god /
for it

The golden Epistell. fo. L. lxxx.

for it takeeth awaye the saynes of aungels/that is to say mekenesse.

But if the contemplatiue man for any reasonable cause be constrained to haue an habyt somwhat better than he wold/ let hym nat be troubled therfore / for his reward shall therby be encreased. Also the contemplatiue man muste haue meakenes in his mouth/that is to saye in spekyng meke thynges/ eschewyng all rybaldry and superfluitie of wordes / nat speakyng subtlyly ne discrepfully/ ne preferring his sentence before other. And if the contemplatiue man here hym selfe praysed for any good dedes / lette hym nat be lyfte vp in his hert therfore / but that he answer thus. All laude and honour be to god that gyueth all thynges.

What am I but duste in the wynde/ or what goodnes comethe of me that am nought elles but drye erthe without water. And yf he be reprovcd in the worlde / lette hym nat be moued therwith/ but that he answer thus.

I am worthy all this and moche more for I haue so ofte offended god / and haue nat made amendes therfor agayn.

Therfore pray ye for me therby suffryng
of such

The golden Epistell.

*In goodly
Deuotion*
of suche temporall reproues / I may es-
cape the shames and reproues cuerla-
stynge. And if the contemplatyue man
be prouoked to angre oz wraethe by the
vngoodly dealynge of his neyghbours
lette hym be wel warre & take good hede
that he answere nat vndiscretely / for co-
menly pryde foloweth argre and wraeth.
Therefore it is good counsayl that whan
angre oz pryde come : that he holde his
peace so longe tyme / tyll the wyll maye
aske helpe of god to suffre / and to take
good auysement howe and what to an-
swere / that he maye sytste ouercome
hymselfe / and than the wraethe shalbe
abated in the herte / so that he maye an-
swere wysely to them that be vndysc.

*Order 20
144*
¶ Thou shalte knowe also that the
deuyll hath greate enuy to a contempla-
tyue man / and yf he can nat hynder hym
by breakynge of the commaundementes
of god / than he wyll styre hym to be ey-
ther lightly moued with wraethe / oz to
be dysposed to somme bayne and vndys-
crete myrth / oz elles to haue some bayne
and vnproufytable wordes. Therefore
the cōtemplatyue man must alway aske
helpe of god that all his wordes and de-

The golden Epistle. Fol. C. lxxxi.
des be gouerned by hym and be holly
directed vnto hym. Also the contempla-
tyue man muste haue mekenesse in all
his workes/ that is to say/ that he do no-
thyng for worldly prayse/ ne that he at-
tempte no newe thyng of him selfe/ and
that he be nat a shamed of no work how
vyle so euer it be so that he maye ther-
by please god / that he flye synfulite
that he do good to all that he can/ and in
euery good dede that he dothe / thynke
that he myght haue do better. Also he
muste chuse to sytte rather with poore
men than with ryche/ rather to obey than
to commaunde / to kepe silence rather
than to speake / to be solitary than to be
wyth mighty men or wyth his worldly
frendes. Also the contemplatyue man
muste hate his owne wyll / ofte remem-
bre his dethe/ flye curiosyte/ all murma-
ringe and grudgyng/ alway remembre
the right wysenesse of god/ and take hede
of his owne affections. Also the contem-
platyue man muste ofte vse confession be
stable and dilygent in his temptations/
and nat be desyre to lyue to none other en-
tente / but that the honoure of god and
helth of soules maye be cincreased.

Gold.

BB.1.

Than

The golden Epistell.

¶ Than if the contēplatyue man that
hath suche affections and suche desyers
as is sayde before/ be chosen in to the of-
fice of an Actyue man / and of obedience
and charitie to god he taketh vpon hym
the rule of other he shall haue a double
rewarde / as it maye appere by this
synplytude. There was a myghtye man
that had a shippe charged with p̄cious
matchaundises/ whiche sayde to his ser-
uaunt this. Go ye with this shippe to
such a porte/ for there I shall haue right
greate entrecase/ if the wynde r̄p̄e labour
manfully and ȳke nat at it/ for your re-
warde shall be great. After as the seruaunt
sayled / a great wynde rose / the stormes
wered great and the shippe was tossed
and broken greuously. Than the gouer-
nour of the shippe wered wery and slowe
and all that were in the ship dispeyred of
theyr lyues/ and agreed to go to some o-
ther porte wher as the wynde wolde
dryue them / and nat to that porte that
their lord had appoynted them to. And
that hearynge/ one of the mooste sayth-
full seruauntes and mooste seruient / so-
towynge throughe greate zele and loue
that he had to his lord toke vpon hym
the

The golden Epistell. Foli. C. lxxxviii.
the gouernaunce of the Shippe / and with
Strength brought the Shippe to the porte
that the lorde assigned them to go to.

¶ Is nat that man that so manfully
brought the Shippe to the porte / worthy
to haue greater rewarde than any of
his felowes : yea truly. So it is of
a good ruler that for the loue of god and
helthe of soules / taketh vppon hym the
charge of gouernaunce of other / and ca-
reth nat for the honour / and truly he
shall haue a double rewarde. First he
shalbe parte taker of the good dedes of
al them that he byngeth to the safe port.
Second his glorie shalbe encreased with
out ende. And contrariwise it shalbe of
them that com to honour and prelacy by
theyr ambition for they shalbe parte ta-
kers of all the paynes and offences of al
them that they toke vppon them to rule.
Second theyr confusion shal neuer haue
ende / for prelates that couepte honours /
be more lyke to strumpettes than to pre-
lates / for they deceyue theyr subiectes by
their yuel examples and their yuell wor-
des / and be nat worthy to be called nei-
ther Contemplatyue né nor Actyue né
but they amende and do due penaunce.

Gold

BB.ii.

Firstly

no of
a good ruler
152

for pre-
lates

The golden Epistell.

¶ Fyſtly the cōtemplatyue man muſt
gyue medicyns to his gheſtes/that is to
ſaye he muſte conſorte them with good
wordes / and to all thynges that come/
lykyng or myſlykyng/ pleaſaunt or diſ-
pleaſaunt/he muſt ſaye thus. I wyll eue-
ry thyng that it pleaſeth our lord that
I ſhulde wyll / though I ſhulde go to
helle. And trewly ſuche a wyll is a me-
dicyne to all thynges that come to the
herte/and is a delyte in all troubles that
come / and a greate temperaunce in all
proſperitie. But bycauſe the contem-
platyue man hath many enemyes/there-
fore he muſte ofte make confeſſion/for as
longe as he wyllfully abyde in ſynne/
haupng tyme and oportunitie to be ch-
ſted/and is neglygent or heedeth it nat
he is rather to be called an Apoſtata be-
fore god than a cōtemplatyue man.

The Actyue lyfe. Also of the dedes of a
man that lyueth in the actyue lyfe.

¶ Thou ſhalte vnderſtande that though
the parte of the cōtemplatyue man be
beſt/that yet the parte of the actyue man
is nat puell but it is very laudable and
moche pleaſaunt to god : therefore I ſhal
ſhewe the howe howe the actyue man
muſt

The golden Epistell. Fol. C. lxxxiii.
muste order hym selfe. He muste haue
as the cōtēplatiue mā hath fyue thynges.
The firste is trewe sayth of holy church.
The seconde is that he knowe the com-
maundementes of god and the counsailes
of the Euangelycall truthc/ and them he
must performe/ in wyll/ worde/ and dede.
¶ Thirdly he muste restryne his tonge
from all puell wordes / that are agaynst
god and his neyghbour / and his handes
from all vnhoneste and vnlaufull de-
des. And his mynde from ouermuch de-
syre of worldly goodes / and from ouer-
greate delyte of worldly pleasures / and
lerne to be content with that god hath
sente hym / and to desyre no superfluous
thynges. Fourthly he shall do the dedes
of mercy resonably in all mekenes / so
that for trust of tho good dedes / he in no
thyng offend god. Fifthly he must loue
god about all thynges / and than hym
selfe / as Martha dyd / for she gaue her
selfe gladly to me folowynge my wordes
and dedes / and afterwarde she gaue all
her goodes for my loue / and lothed al te-
porall thynges desyring onely thynges
euerlastynge / and therfore she sustayned
all thynges patiently as they came; and

The golden Epistell.

cared as well for the helth of other as of
her selfe/ thynkyng alwaye on my cha-
ritie and on my passiō/ and she was glad
in troubles/ meey in aduersities/ and lo-
ued all people as a mother her chylde.
She wolde also ofte folowe me whan I
was in the worlde / desyringe nothyng
but to here me. She also had compassi-
on of them that were in trouble. She
conforted them that were in heynesse/
releued them that were sycke / she cursed
no man ne saide pueil to no man/ but dis-
symuled the pueil maners of her neigh-
bours all that she might/ and prayde al-
waye for them. Therefore curry man
that desyreth to lyue charitably in the
actyue lyfe muste folowe **Mart**ha / lo-
uyng his neighbour to the ende that he
maye come to heuen / but nat to fauour
his spynn or pueil life / styenge his owne
praple/and pryde and doublenesse of hert/
and wrath and enuy he may nat folowe.
Bnt thou shalte vnderstande/ that whan
Martha prayde for her brother **Lazar**
that was ded/ she came firste to me/ but
her brother was nat rayسد forthwith
vppon her commyng / but afterwarde
Mary was called / and whan she came
than at

The golden Epistell. fo. L. lxxxviii.
tha at the prayer of them both together
their brother was raysed from dethe.
So it is spiritually/ for he that despyeth
perfitly to come to the lyfe contempla-
tyue must firste exercise hym selfe well in
the actiue lyfe / labourynge all that he
maye to the honor of god in good bodily
labours. And lerne firste to respyte all
fleschly despyes/ and to withstand mygh-
tely the fendes temptations / and than
he maye afterwarde with good despye-
ration ascende to the higher degree that
is to say to the lyfe contemplatyue / for
he that is nat proued and well assayed
with temptations / and hath nat yet fully
ouercome the yuell mocyns of the
fleshe/ maye nat holly sette hym selfe to
heuenly thynges. But who is the deed
brother of thactyue man and of the con-
templatyue man/ but there vndiscrete de-
des/ for many tymes a good dede is done
with an vndiscrete entet and of an uncon-
staunt mynd/ and therfore it is but as it
were deed. wherfore that a good dede
may be acceptable to god / it is raysed a-
gayne and cometh to lyfe by the actyue
man and by the cōtemplatyue man/ that
is to saye whā the neyghboure is purely

Gold

BB.iii.

loued

The golden Epistell.
loued for god and to god/ and god is onely
despyred for hym selfe aboue all thinges.
And than euery good dede of man or wo-
man is pleasur to god. Therefore I sayd
in my gospel/ that Mary had chosyn the
better parte.

The lyfe of the Actiue man is good
whan he soroweth for the synnes of his
neighbour/ but his parte is better whā
he labouryth all that he maye that his
neighbours maye do well and perseuer
well vnto the ende/ and that he do al that
he dothe for the loue of god. But the
parte of the contemplatiue man is beste
whan he onely beholdeth heuynly thinges
and the helth of soules. whan the mynde
is fulfylled with good affections/ and
whan he is well at reste from the
clamorous noise of worldly bus-
synesse and thynketh alwaye
god present vnto hym/
and setteth his me-
ditations fully in
the loue of god/ and laboureth
seruent fully therein bothe
daye and nyght.

✠ * ✠

Christe

The golden Epistell . fol . C.lxxxv.
Christ saythe / that the deuotion of
thynfideles in tyme to come shalbe moche
more then the deuotion of the chrysten
men/and they shal all syng ioye be to the
father/to the sonne/and to the holy
goost/& honour to al his sayntes
Amen. The sixte boke of the re
uelations of saynt Bir
gette/ the. lxxiii.
Chapitre .

The sonne of god spebeth to
his spouse saynt Byrget / sa
yng. Thou shalt knowe that
yet there shalbe so moche deu
tion in the infydeles/ that chrysten men
shalbe as they? spirytual seruantes. and
scripture shalbe fulfilled that sayth. the
people nat vnderstandynge shall gloypie
me/and desertes shalbe buylded agayne/
and they shal syng all ioye be to the fa
ther to the sonne/and to the holy gooste.
and honour to all sayntes. Amen.
What thynges be necessary to hym
that desireth to viset the landes of the in
fydeles. The. vi. boke of the reuelations
of saynt Byrget. The. xli. chapitre
in the ende of the chapitre.

Gold.

BB. b.

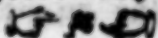
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The golden Epistell.

A The sonne of god speaketh to saynt
Byrget / and saith he that despyet h
to dyspre the londs of the infydels ough
to haue .v. thinges. The fyrste is that he
discharge his conscience with trewe con
fession & contrition / as though he shulde
forthwith dye. Seconde that he putte a
waye al lyghtnesse of maners and of ap
paryll / nat takynge hede to newe custo
mes or vanytyes / but to suche laudable
customes as his auncesters haue vsed be
fore tyme. Thyrde that he haue no tem
porall thyng but for necessyte and to
the honour of god / and if he knowe any
thyng vnrightwysely gotten / epyther by
hym selfe or by his auncesters that he re
store it / whether it be lytell or great.
Fourthly / that he labour to the intent
that the vnsaythfull men maye come to
the trewe catholycall faythe / nat despy
ryng theyr goodes ne catel / or any o
ther thyng / but to the onely necessitie of
the body. Fyftly that he haue full wyll
gladly to dye for the honour of god / and
so to dyspose hym selfe in laudable con
uersation that he maye descrue to come to
a good and a blessed ending. **A M E N.**

¶ Finis.

Here endeth certayne revelations
of saynt Birgette/with an Epistel
of saynt Barnarde/called
the golden Epistell.



Here after foloweth the chapitres
of this present boke.

Of the Imptacyon or folowynge of
Christe: and of the dyspyng of all
vanities of the worlde.

The fyrste
Chapitre.

Folio primo.

Agaynste vayne secular conynge and
of a meke knowynge of our selfe.

The.ii.
Chapitre.

Folio secundo.

Of the teachynge of trouthe.

The
thirde Chapitre.

Fo.iii.

That lyght credence is nat to be gyuē
to wordes.

The.iiii. Chapitre.

Fo.v.

Of the redynge of holy scripture.

The.v.
Chapitre.

Fo.vi.

Of inordinate affections.

The.vi.
Chapitre.

The.vi.

Fo.vii.

That vayne hope and elatis of mynde
are to be fled and auoyded.

The.vii.
Chapitre.

The.vii.

Folio eodem.

That moche familiarite is to be fled.

The.viii. Chapitre.

Fo.viii.

Of meke

The table

- O**f meke subiectiō and obedience and
that we shuld gladly folowe the counsaile
of other. The. ix. Chapitre. fo. eodem.
- T**hat we shulde auoyde superfluite of
wordes & the company of worldly lyving
people. The. x. Chapitre. fo. ix.
- T**he meanes to get peace & of desire to
profyte in vertues. The. xi. Cha. fo. x.
- O**f the profyte of aduersyte. The. xii.
Chapitre. folio. xii.
- O**f tēacions to be resysted. The. xiii.
Chapitre. folio. eodem.
- T**hat we shal nat iudge lyghtly other
mennes dedes : ne cleue moche to our
owne wyll. The. xiiii. Chapitre. fo. xv.
- O**f werkes done in charite. The. xv.
Chapitre. folio. eodem.
- O**f the sufferynge of other mēnes de-
fautes. The. xvi. Chapitre. fo. xvi.
- W**hat shulde be the lyfe of a true religi-
ous persone. The. xvii. Cha. fo. xvii.
- O**f the examptes of holy fathers.
The. xviii. Chapitre. fo. xviii.
- O**f the exercise of a good religious
persone. The. xix. Chapitre. fo. xx.
- O**f the loue of ouerlynes and seilence.
The. xx. Chapitre. fo. xxii.
- O**f compunction of herte. The. xxi.
Cha.

The table.

Chapitre.	fo. xxiii.
Of the consyderynge of the misery of mankynde/and wherein the felicitye of mā standeth. The. xxi. Chapitre.	fo. xxvi.
Of the remedy; aſſe of deth. The. xxii. Chapitre.	fo. xxviii.
Of the last iugement and of the payne that is ordeyned for synne. The. xxiii. Chapitre.	fo. xxxi.
Of the ſeruenta amendynge of all our lyfe and that we ſhal ſpecially take hede of our owne ſoule helth before all other. The. xxv. Chapitre.	fo. xxxiii.

☛ The chapitres of the ſeconde boke.

Of inwarde conuerſacion. The fyrſt Chapitre.	Folio. xxxviii.
Of a meke knowynge of our owne deſautes. The. ii. Chapitre.	fo. xl.
Howe good it is for a mā to be peacefull. The. iii. Chapitre.	fo. xli.
Of a pure mynde and ſymple intente. The. iiii. Chapitre.	fo. xlii.
Of the knowynge of our ſelfe. The. v. Chapitre.	fo. xliii.
Of the gladnes of a clene conſcience. The. vi. Chapitre.	fo. xliiii.
	Of the

The table.

Of the loue of Iesu about all thyngs.
The.vii. Chapitre. fo. xvi.

Of the familiar frendshyppe of Iesu.
The.viii. Chapitre. fo. xvi.

Of the wantynge of all solace and cō-
forte. The.ix. Chapitre. fo. xlii.

Of prayng thankes to god for his ma-
nyfolde graces. The.x. Chapitre. fo. li.

Of the smale nombre of the louers of
the crosse. The.xi. Chapitre. fo. liii.

Of the waye of the crosse / and howe
phtable paciēce is in aduersite. The.xii.
Chapitre. fo. lv.

The Chapitres of the
thyrd boke.

Of the inwarde speaking of Christe to
a faythful soule. The.i. Cha. fo. i.

Howe almyghty god speaketh inwardly
to mānes soule without sounde of word.
The seconde Chapitre. fo. lxi.

That the wordes of god are to be herte
with greate mekenes / and that there be
but fewe that pōnder the as they ought
to do. The.iii. Chapitre. fo. lxxi.

A prayer to optayne the grace of deu-
cion. The.iiii. Chapitre. fo. lxxii.

Howe

The table

How we ought to be conuersante be-
fore god in trouth and mekenes. The.v.
Chapitre. fo.lxxiii.

Of the meruaylous effecte of the loue
of god. The.vi. Chapitre. fo.lxxv.

Of the profite of a true lover of god.
The.vii. Chapitre. fo.lxxviii.

I: How Grace is to be kepte close
through the vertu of mekenes. The.viii.
Chapitre. fo.lxx.

How we shall thynke through meke-
nes our selfe vile and abiecte in the sight
of god. The.ix. Chapitre. fo.lxxii.

How all thyngs are to be referred to
god as ende of euery werke. The.x.
Chapitre. fo.lxxiii.

That it is swete & delectable to serue
god and to forsake the worlde. The.xi.
Chapitre. fo.lxxiiii.

That the desires of the herte ought to
be wel examyned and wel to be moderated.
The.xii. Chapitre. fo.lxxvi.

How we shulde kepe patience and co-
ntynually stryue agaynst all concupiscence.
The.xiii. Chapitre. folio eodem.

Of the obedience of a meke subject after
the example of our lord Iesu Christe.
The.xiiii. Chapitre. fo.lxxviii.

Of

The table.

- O**f the secreete & hyd ingement; of god
to be cōsidered / that we be nat proued of
our good dedes. The. xv. Cha. fo. lxxix.
- H**owe a man shall orde hym selfe in
his desyres. The. xvi. Cha. fo. lxxx.
- A** prayer that the wyll of god alwaye
fulfyllled. The. xvii. Chapitre. fo. lxxxi.
- T**hat the very true solace and cōforte
is in god. The. xviii. Cha. fo. lxxxii.
- T**hat all our study & busynes munde
ought to be put in god. The. xix. Chapitre. fo. lxxxiii.
- T**hat all tēporall myseries are gladly
to be borne through exāple of Christe.
The. xx. Chapitre. folio. eodem.
- O**f patience sufferynge of iniuries and
wronges / and who is truly patiente.
The. xxi. Chapitre. fo. lxxxv.
- O**f the knowynge of our owne mys-
mytes / and of the myseries of this lyfe.
The. xxii. Chapitre. fo. lxxxvi.
- H**owe a man shulde rest in god aboue
all thyng. The. xxiii. fo. lxxxvii.
- O**f the remembryng of the greate and
manifold benefautes of god. The. xxiiii.
Chapitre. fo. lxxxix.
- O**f foure thyng; that bynne peace in
to the soule. The. xxv. Cha. fo. lxxxviii.
- A** pray

The table.

A prayer agaynst yuell thoughtes.
The. xvi. Chapitre. fo. eodem.

A prayer for the clerynge of mannes
mynde. The. xviij. Cha. fo. lxxxv.

That it is nat good to serch curiously
a nother mānes lyfe. The. xxv.

Chapitre. folio eodem.

In what thyng peace of herte and
greatest yfite of man stādeth. The. xxix.

Chapitre. fo. lxxxviii.

Of the lyberte excellency and worthy-
nes of a fre mynde. The. xxx.

Chapitre. fo. lxxxv.

That priuate loue most letteth a man
fro god. The. xxxi. Cha. fo. lxxxv.

A prayer for the purgynge of mānes
soule and for heuēly wylsome & the grace

of god to be opteyned and had. The. xxxii.

Chapitre. fo. lxxxviii.

Agaynste the euill saynges of detrac-
tors. The. xxxiii. Chapitre. fo. eodem.

Howe almyghty god is to be inward-
ly called vnto in tyme of trybulacion.

The. xxxiiii. Chapitre. fo. lxxxix.

Of the helpe of god to be asked: and of
a full truste to recouer through deuoute

prayer our former grace. The. xxxv.

Chapitre. fo. l.

Ed.

Ed.

The table.

**Howe we shulde forgette all creatures
that we myght fynde oure creatour.**

The. xxvi. Chapitre. fo. C. ii.

**Howe we shulde forsake our selfe and
thrust downe all couetise out of our hert.**

The. xxvii. Chapitre. fo. C. iii.

**Of the vnstablenes of mānes herte,
that our fynall intent in all thyngs shuld
be to god. The. xxviii. Cha. fo. C. v.**

**Howe our lord god sauoureth to his
louer sweetely aboue all thyngs and in all
thynges. The. xxxix. Chapitre. fo. eodē.**

**That there is no full surte fro tempe-
racō in this lyfe. The. xl. cha. fo. C. vii.**

**Agaynst the vayne iugement of man.
The. xli. Chapitre. fo. C. viii.**

**Of a pure and an hole forsakynge of
our selfe and of our owne. wyl / that we
myght get the fredome of spirit & folowe
the wyl of god. The. xlii. Cha. fo. C. ix.**

**Howe a man shall rule hym selfe i out
warde thyngs / and howe he ought to cal
to god for helpe in all perylles & daungers
The. xliii. Chapitre. fo. C. x.**

**That a man shulde nat be importune
in his busynes. The. xliiii. cha. fo. C. xi.**

**That a man hath no goodnes of hym
selfe & that he may nat ryghtfully glorify
hym**

Anna Margareta

Rev 50